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THE CHOICER MISCELLANEOUS WORKS OF

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

DUTCH PICTURES;

AND

PICTURES DONE WITH A QUILL.

DUTCH PICTURES

WITH SOME

SKETCHES IN THE FLEMISH MANNER;

AND

PICTURES DONE WITH A QUILL.

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BY

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA,

AUTHOR OF "PARIS HERSELF AGAIN," "AMERICA REVISITED," "TWICE ROUND THE CLOCK," &C.

A NEW EDITION.

ILLUSTRATED WITH EIGHT PAGE ENGRAVINGS.

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CONTENTS.

DUTCH PICTURES.

		PAGE
I.	THE SHADOW OF A DUTCH PAINTER	13
II.	OUR DOUBLES	24
III.	THE SHADOW OF DAY AND NIGHT	33
IV.	THE GOLDEN CALF	40
V.	A NEW RAILWAY LINE	52
VI.	WANT PLACES	64
VII.	MORE PLACES WANTED	83
VIII.	OLD LADIES	99
IX.	LITTLE CHILDREN	109
X.	TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF BEEF	120
XI.	FURTHER TRAVELS IN SEARCH OF BEEF	129
XII.	THE METAMORPHOSED PAGODA	145
XIII.	THE LAND OF NOD: A KINGDOM OF RECONCILED IMPOSSIBILITIES	162
XIV.	TWENTY MILES	171
XV.	FIRST FRUITS	183
XVI.	OLD CLOTHES	192

PICTURES DONE WITH A QUILL.

I.	DUMBLEDOWNDEARY	209
II.	A POODLE AT THE PROW	224
III.	THE PHILOSOPHY OF YOURSELF	237

		PAGE
IV.	A TOUR IN BOHEMIA	246
V.	BIRTHDAYS	260
VI.	CHAMBERS IN THE TEMPLE	268
VII.	A JACKDAW UPON A WEDDING	289
VIII.	LITTLE OLD MEN	311
IX.	THE PAPER ON THE WALL	323
X.	FLOWERS OF THE WITNESS-BOX	331
XI.	ENGLISH MILORDS	343
XII.	LEGS	352
XIII.	STONE PICTURES	360
XIV.	WAITER!	367
XV.	UNFORTUNATE JAMES DALEY	376
XVI.	MADAME BUSQUE'S	381
XVII.	SIR JOHN BARLEYCORN AT HOME	389

DUTCH PICTURES;

WITH SOME SKETCHES IN THE FLEMISH MANNER.

"*Vidi tantum* . . . . . ."

NOTE:—The few stories originally included under the head of "Dutch Pictures" will be found in the volume of Mr. George Augustus Sala's miscellaneous works entitled "Short Stories: Humorous and Pathetic, Tragic and Grotesque."

PREFACE

(TO THE EDITION OF 1861).

On the Batavian School of Delineation.

I THINK that of would-be epigrammatic, alliterative, or simply clap-trap titles to books, we have had, of late years, satiety. Am I, in calling my volume "Dutch Pictures," adding but one more "taking" title to the list? Can "Dutch Pictures" have any more real meaning or significance than "Sand and Shells," "Patchwork," "Odds and Ends," "Olla Podrida," "Waifs and Strays," "Bubble and Squeak," or "Gammon and Spinach"? I hope to prove that I have had a definite object in attaching to these papers their present title, and that it is not, after all, grossly inappropriate.

I put "Dutch Pictures" at the head of my page for these reasons. First, because, unless I am much mistaken, the Batavian painters of the seventeenth century were remarkable for their careful delineation of the minutest objects in nature, animate and inanimate, bestowing infinite pains on the reproduction of, or the shadows and reflections in, pots and pans,—of the twigs in a birch-broom, of the texture of a carpet or a curtain, of the fat and lean of a loin of pork, of the knitted stockings of a vrow, of the red nose of a boor, of the peelings of carrots and turnips, of the plumage of a bird, of the veins in a cabbage, of the smoke from a

tobacco-pipe. Next, because I have endeavoured, perhaps unsuccessfully, but always laboriously, to imitate with the pen what these ingenious artists have done with the pencil, and to bring to the description of the men and the manners of the times in which I have lived that minuteness—it may be pettiness of observation—which makes every Dutch Picture, to the meanest, curious, if not excellent.

Let me not be mistaken by critics. There are Dutchmen and Dutchmen. There are the Teniers, the Gerard Douws, the Ostades, and the Metzus—the great makers of minutiæ, but surpassingly gifted likewise in skilful draughtsmanship, in harmonious composition, in brilliant colour, in delicate texture, in exquisite finish. Such admirable exemplars answer, perhaps, to our Goldsmiths, our Lambs, our Leigh Hunts, and our Washington Irvings. I will name no living writer for fear of being howled at. But there are Dutch painters of the second, the third, and the fourth rank. There are the Wouvermans, the Mieris, the Breughels ; there are, lower still, the Jan Steens and the Schkalkens ; there are the Weenix, the Van Huysums, the Vanvoorsts, and the Steenwycks. There may be mentioned, again, the jolly Jordaens, and the coarse but brilliant Adrian Brouwer. When the pearly tints of a Teniers, the wonderful light and shade of an Isaac Ostade, the matchless manipulation* of a Gerard Douw, are almost beyond price, collectors and curiosity-hunters can yet find a word of praise and a corner in their cabinets for the inferior works of the Dutch school—not gems, intaglios, or enamels, certainly, but rather buttons, and quaint carved toys, and tradesmen's tokens of art, which give them, so far as the limited capacity, but untiring industry, of

* I use the long word in preference to "handling," because the latter has been degraded and distorted by Art critics, who speak of mere coarse dash and vigour in a picture as "handling," whereas by "manipulation," I mean the painstaking work of the pencil wielded by a highly educated hand.

the Dutchman went, his notion of the interior of a school-room, the economy of a kitchen, the jollity of a tavern, or the humour of a *kermesse*. What scenes analogous to those just mentioned I have witnessed at home or abroad, I have attempted to draw with pen and ink, slowly and carefully, in the Dutch manner; and if I have failed, it has been for lack of power, and not of will or toil.

A favourite device adopted now-a-days by those whose business it is to dissect a book, is to ask the author his reasons for writing, for publishing, or for republishing it. There is no easier cry than *cui bono?* and the response is not so very difficult. There is a story told of Mr. John Cooper, the tragedian—who is facetiously supposed to be many hundred years old—stating that he once asked William Shakspeare why he drank so much soda-water and sal-volatile, to which the bard tranquilly replied, "Because I like it, John." I might retort, were I asked my reasons for putting forth these old pictures, of which the majority originally appeared in *Household Words* between the years 1851 and 1856, inclusive, that to do so suits my humour, my vanity or my interest; but I have two more reasons, less egotistical and perhaps as valid. I wrote the stories in this book with the purpose of amusing my readers, and I hope that those who read them may derive some amusement from them now.* I wrote the sketches and essays as studies of the manners I saw around me, and with the idea that they might not be without some interest when those manners had passed away. Both stories and sketches may be disfigured by errors of style, by involved and confused language, by repetitions, by inaccuracies, and by verbal affectations, involuntary, but not the less offensive. With respect to such blemishes, I have but one plea to offer, and to repeat—that there are Dutchmen and Dutch-

* See Note facing the commencement of Preface.

men, and that to all painters are not given the magic *coup-d'œil* of Ostade, the unerring touch of Teniers.

I have heard that a politician once declared that had he not been bred up to the Quaker persuasion, he would surely have been a prizefighter. It is probable that, had I not drifted into authorship, I should have been a broker's man. I can even remember in early life once "taking stock" in a theatrical wardrobe, and once making out the Christmas bills for a fashionable tailor; and I can recall the delight with which, in a neat round hand, I expatiated upon "one demon's dress, complete," "six page's tunics and tights," and again upon "one best superfine Saxony broad cloth frock-coat, with silk sleeve and skirt lining, buttons and binding." On that same art of inventory-making and stock-taking I still take my stand. Whatever success I have to be thankful for in a life of incessant and painful labour—never without censure, seldom relieved by encouragement or praise—pursued in sickness and sorrow, in poverty and obscurity, has been due to the pen and the inkhorn of the inventory-maker, to persistence in describing the things I have seen, and to a habit of setting down the common things I have thought about them: exactly as they have been presented to me, and exactly as they have occurred.

GEORGE AUGUSTUS SALA.

UPTON COURT, BUCKS,
September, 1861.

DUTCH PICTURES.

I.

The Shadow of a Dutch Painter.

YELLOW, thumbed, devastated by flies and time, stained with spots of oil and varnish, broken-backed, dog's-eared — a sorry, lazar-house copy, which no bookstall-keeper would look at, and at which the meanest of buttermen would turn up his nose—I have a book which I love. It is the Reverend Mr. Pilkington, his Dictionary of Painters. You know it, oh ye amateurs of the fine arts, seeking to verify the masters and the dates of your favourite canvasses! You know it, ye industrials of Cawdor Street, for it is your grand book of reference, when your journeyman artist Smith, only recently emancipated from limning "Red Lions," and making "Bulls" radiant with gold leaf, and then painting a Holy Family and affixing thereto the signature (pious fraud!) of Domenichino or Zurbaran, runs the risk, if to the signature he adds a date, of making a slight mistake in chronology, and dating his work fifty years or so before the painter's birth, or after his death. I have seen, ere now, an original Rembrandt (with a flourish to the R at which the boldest of sceptics would not dare to cavil), dated 1560.

I know my Pilkington well, and of old, and I love it, for it is full of Shadows. I can keep good shadowy company with

it; now with the cream—the R.A.s of the old masters: Titian in the Mocenigo Palace receiving his pencil from the hands of Charles the Fifth, with a condescending bow; Rubens riding abroad with fifty gentlemen in his train; Raffaelle lying in state, with princes and cardinals around, and his glorious Transfiguration at the bed-head; now, with the less prominent celebrities; jovial, clever, worthless Adrian Brouwer; Gian Bellini, so meek, so mild, and so pious; honest Peter Claes, so great in painting pots and pans; stolid old Dirk Stoop the battle painter.

Turn again, Pilkington, and let me summon the shadow of Peter de Laar.

We are in Rome, in the year of grace sixteen hundred and twenty-three, and in a house in the Strada Vecchia. Light steals with no garish glitter, but with a chastened, mellowed softness, through a solitary window into a grand old room. Not but what there are other windows, and large ones too: but they are all fastened and curtained up, that so much light as is needed, and no more, shall permeate into the painter's studio. Three large easels I see, and a smaller one, far off, in a corner, whereat a fair-haired boy is making a study, in chalk, from a plaster bust on a pedestal. There is a good store of old armour, old furniture, old tapestry scattered about, and, above all, an old painted ceiling, where a considerable contingent from Olympus once disported themselves upon clouds, but are well nigh invisible now through clouds of dust and smoke from this lower earth. In revenge for their forced obscurity above, the gods and goddesses have descended to the shelves, where, in plaster, and wanting some of them a leg or an arm, they are as beautiful, and more useful than above. Venus stands amicably side by side with Actæon and his dogs, while in strange proximity is the horned Moses of Michael Angelo. There is a great velvet-covered silver-clasped book of "Hours" on a lectern of carved oak; and in an ebony cabinet, among strange poignards and quaint pieces of plate, are a few books: a copy of Livy with a passage kept open by an ivory rosary, some dog's-eared sketch-books, and a parchment-covered folio of St. Augustine's works,

the margins scrawled over with skeletons and fragments of men with muscles in violent relief.

Nor are these last the only muscular decorations of the apartment. One shelf is entirely devoted to a range of phials, containing anatomical preparations sufficiently hideous to the view; and there stands, close to a table where a serving lad with an eminently French face is grinding colours on a marble slab and humming an air the while, a horrible figure as large as life, from which the skin has been flayed off, showing the muscles and arteries beneath—a dreadful sight to view. It may be of wax or of plaster, but I would as soon not meet with it, out of a dissecting-room, or a charnel-house. A skeleton, too—the bones artistically wired together, and supported on a tripod—would show that the occupant of the apartment was not averse from the study of osteology. This skeleton has no head, the place thereof being supplied by a mask, a cardboard "dummy" of a superlatively inane cast of beauty: the blue eyes and symmetrical lips (curved into an unmeaning and eternal simper), the pink cheeks, and silken doll's tresses, contrasting strangely with the terribly matter-of-fact bones and ligaments beneath—the moral to my lady's looking-glass.

This room might belong to a surgeon who is fond of painting (for there are more bones, and one or two real grinning skulls, about), or to a painter who is fond of surgery; for the anatomical drawings which crowd every vacant place, which are scrawled on the walls and furniture in chalk and charcoal and red cinnabar, bear trace of a masterly eye and of an experienced hand. If the apartment be the habitation of a painter, however, he is no poet, no admirer of music, no gallant devoted to gay clothes, or delighting to serenade noble dames; for through the length and breadth of the studio I can catch no glimpse of lute, or plumed hat, or velvet mantle trailing on a chair—of sprucely bound volume of Ariosto or Boccaccio, or, worse, of ribald Aretin, of soiled glove, or crushed rose-bud, or crumpled ribbon.

The painter, if he be one, must be a grave, sedate cavalier, and so, of a truth, he is. No one yet accused Messire Nicolas

Poussin, to whom this studio belongs, of gallantry, or verse-making, or lute-twanging, or flower-seeking. He is a tall, well-made, personable gentleman, prematurely gray, and of a grave presence. He wears a *justaucorps* of black velvet, not quite innocent of paint-stains, and a well-worn cap of red silk sits on his crisp and curled locks. He carries palette on thumb and pencil in hand, with which last he is busily calling up, on the canvas before him, a jovial, riotous, wine-bibbing, dishevelled crew of fauns, satyrs, bacchanals and hamadryads, dancing, shouting, and leaping round a most disreputable-looking old Silenus, bestriding a leopard and very far gone in Grecian vintages.

Anon, the fair-haired boy quits the room, and, returning, announces that there is one below would speak with his master. The words are scarcely out of his mouth, when the stranger, of whom it is question, enters. With much creaking of shoes, and cracking of joints, and rustling of his brave garments, he advances to Poussin, and presents him with a packet of letters, which the painter receives with a grave reverence. This is Peter de Laar: here is his Shadow.

Take Sancho Panza's head; blend in the expression of the countenance the shrewd impudence of Gil Blas, the sententious, yet saucy wit of Figaro, and the stolid humour of Molière's Sganarelle, yet leave the close-cropped bullet skull, the swarthy tint, the grinning ivories, the penthouse ears and twinkling little eyes of the governor of Barataria; mount this head on a trunk combining the strength and muscular development of Buonarotti's *torso*, with the exuberant rotundity of Falstaff; plant this trunk on the legs of Edward Longshanks, or of that member of the Daddy Longlegs family whose inability or disinclination to perform his orisons led to his being precipitated down an indefinite number of stairs. Add to all this, arms always placed at distressingly eccentric angles to the body; feet, the toes of which are always turned in the contrary direction to that which they properly should be; hands, with joints for ever cracking, with palms for ever smiting each other, with thumbs and fingers and

wrists for ever combining themselves into strange gestures, into concentric balls of quaint humour; a nose which, when blown, resounds like a Chaldean trumpet in the new moon; moustaches fierce as those of the Copper Captain, long as those of a Circassian chieftain, twisted upwards like those of Mephistopheles in the outlines of Moritz Retsch.

Cover this strange, joyous, bizarre, humorously awkward, quaint and *goguenarde* frame with habiliments so strangely cut, so queerly fashioned, of such staring colours, bespattered with such fantastic embroidery, that you know not whether to call them vulgar or picturesque, ridiculous or pleasing. Balance me this notable figure in any position out of his proper centre of gravity; make him sit on tables, or on easels, or on wainscot ledges, till Master Poussin has courteously signalled an easy chair to him; and even then let him sit on the back, the legs, the arms thereof, rather than sit as Christians are wont to repose. Let him do nothing as other men do; let him have a voice the faintest vibration of which, before ever he utters a word, shall make you hold your sides with laughter; let him have been born a low comedian, a mountebank, a merry-andrew, a jack-pudding, a live marionette, even as some men are born scoundrels, and some women queens. Let him have wit, talent, impudence (and monstrous impudence!), good-humour and versatility; let him be a joyous companion, a firm friend, indifferently moral, questionably sober, and passing honest; imagine him to be all these, and you have the shadow of Peter de Laar, the Dutch painter, better known in Pilkingtonian and auction room lore by the pseudonym given him by the Italians, with reference to his witty buffoonery, of *Il Bamboccio.*

Peter has come straight from dear old Amsterdam; from the sluggish canals, the square-cut trees, the washing tub-like luggers and galliots, the parti-coloured houses, the clean flag-stones, tulip-beds, pictorial tiles, multifarious wind-mills, pagoda hay-stacks, pickled gherkins, linsey-woolsey petticoats, and fat, honest, stupid, kind Dutch faces of the City of the Dykes and the Dams, to Rome. He has come as straight, moreover, as the governor of

the Low Countries, as the police of M. de Richelieu in France, as a slender purse, and an inveterate propensity to turn out of the beaten track wherever there were pretty faces, good wine, or good company to be found, would allow him to progress. He is come to study landscape painting in Italy, and has brought letters of introduction to Poussin, from persons of consideration both in Holland and France.

The great French painter receives him with cordiality. Wine and meats are brought in. Presently enter two friends of Poussin, both painters: Monsieur Sandrart, who has left but an unsubstantial shadow to us, and Monsieur Gelée, whose real appellation has also been forgotten, but who will live, I trust, as long as painting lives, under the title of Claude Lorraine. Peter de Laar is introduced to these worthies. They talk of things literary, of things pictorial; of the last scandal in the Sacred College, of the last squib on the Corso, the last lampoon pasted on Pasquin's statue; of the success of the Cavaliere Vandyck in England, of the probable jealousy thereat of the Cavaliere Rubens; of Gaspar Dughet—Nicolas's brother-in-law and pupil, who adopted his master's patronymic—and of his friendship with Albano. They are grave at first, but somehow Peter de Laar makes them all laugh. Then there are more wines and more meats, and considerably more laughter. Suddenly, from no man knows whither, Peter produces a fiddle. He plays once, and twice, and thrice, and again. He plays the good old airs of Holland, such as Teniers' vrows dance to, and Ostade's boors nod lazily to, guzzling beer the while; such as the lady in the satin dress of Honthorst plays so sweetly to the cavalier in buff boots; such as the hurdygurdy players of Metzu and Jan Steen grind so piteously before cottage doors; such as bring the tears into the eyes of the good company in the old house in the Strada Vecchia, though Peter de Laar be the only Dutchman present.

Peter can paint, and paint well, besides playing on the fiddle. He has a pretty hand, too, for turning verses—the more satirical the better. He is a good classic and inimitable story-teller, and a practical joker unrivalled for invention and audacity. He can

smoke like a Dutchman, as he is, and sing in madrigals, and do tricks of legerdemain wonderful to look at. He is come to spend three months among the beautiful Italian scenery, but how long do you think he stops? Five years. Soon the grave and sedate Nicolas Poussin, soon the saturnine Claude Gelée, yclept Lorraine, began to find that they cannot do without the sprightly Dutchman. He fiddles, or touches the viol di gamba or the harpsichord, before they set to work of a morning; he sings to them as he and they paint; or, while a tint is drying, or the sky is too overcast for him to paint the sunny landscapes by, he will throw his huge grotesque laugh-provoking limbs on a stool, and from one of the tomes in the ebon cabinet read forth in a bold strident voice the sounding prose of Livy that Master Poussin loves so well to listen to; or he will "lisp in numbers," and clearing away the dust and cobwebs from crabbed Basle or Haarlem Latin characters—call forth joy and merriment from Master Quintus Horatius Flaccus, and Master P. Virgilius Maro their repositories.

But when work is over (Peter can work well and play well), it is then that his supple joints, his joyous face, his great hearty laugh come into full play. It is in the wine-shops, among the merry crowds on the Corso and the Pincian Hill, in moonlight junketings among the ruins of the Colliseum, in the gloomy Ghetto among the Jews, playing them roguish tricks, that he earns his surname of "Il Bamboccio," that he becomes the idol and the glory of the Italian jokers and hoaxers. We have been too much accustomed to look at the Italians as a sentimental and romantic people; yet, in pure fact, few nations possess so much of the comic vein. A glance at the memoirs of Baldinucci, at the glorious repertory of hoaxes to be found in the "Decameron," at the infinity of pantomimes, farces, and burlesques to which the little Venetian theatres gave birth; or even at the buffooneries of that superlative literary rascal, Peter Aretino, would prove the contrary. Punch came from Italy, so did Toby; so did harlequin, columbine, clown, and pantaloon. Fancy the stealing of sausages and the animation of clock-faces

to have had their origins in the clime of Dante and Petrarch, oh, ye Della Cruscans and readers of Rosa Matilda novels!

If orchards were to be rifled, old ladies frightened, monks waylaid and enticed to drink strong waters till they went home intoning profane canticles to the great scandal of the monastic orders—who but Il Bamboccio? If tradesmen's signs were to be altered, names erased, obnoxious collectors of the salt-tax to be tarred and feathered, or any other achievements to be accomplished—who but Il Bamboccio? Like many practical jokers as famous, Peter de Laar not only enjoys the fame of what he does, but of a great deal of what he neither does do nor has any hand in doing. All the hoaxes, all the satires, all the practical jokes, all the caricatures, all the *concetti*, are credited to his account. Though he strenuously denies it, he is set down for certain as the heir-at-law to the celebrated Pasquin. If ever a pasquinade appears against a Cardinal, an epigram on a Monsignore, a couplet on love, politics, or divinity—who but Il Bamboccio is fixed upon as the culprit?

Every evening, after the heat of the day, when the dust is laid and the cool breezes come in refreshingly from the Campagna, the grandees of Rome come forth to walk on the Corso. Priests, gentles, noble ladies, *cavalieri serventi* and *patiti*, stately Cardinals in their coaches of scarlet and gold, drawn by eight mules a-piece, walk, ride, flirt, or decorously amble up and down. There are smiles, and jests, and smart witticisms, and brilliant skirmishes of gallantry round the ladies. One Friday, in the year 1624, at the very height and fashionable time of the promenade, a huge elderly ape, a white-headed, vicious, bushy-haired, villainous animal, which would be, perhaps, were he to stand upright, nearly as large as a man, appears at the further extremity of the Corso. Gravely he marches, looking slyly at the ladies under their veils, and grimacing horribly. Some laugh, some shriek, some cry that he has escaped from a menagerie. All at once, with an appalling scream and a chattering such as man never heard before, he stops opposite a richly-dressed lady, called La Parqueria, and, in defiance of all laws of politeness and etiquette, gives her a

round of kisses in amazingly rapid succession; then, turning on his tail, flies and is seen no more.

Now La Parqueria, I grieve to tell it, is rather more beautiful than good. Scandal, busy at Rome as elsewhere, says naughty things of her with reference to a certain Cardinal. Next day, on the statue of Pasquin appears a most abusive libel, called *il bracciamento*, in which, in reference to the occurrence of the day before, his Eminence the Cardinal is likened to an old ape. The affair makes a furious noise in Rome; and our friend Bamboccio is generally believed to know more about it than he cares to aver. He drinks, and fiddles, and paints none the less, but he keeps his own counsel, goes home rather earlier of an evening, and never alone, and is heard to boast a good deal in public touching being cunning of fence. As for the poor Parqueria, so great is the hubbub and ridicule, that she is obliged to leave Rome.

At this time of day it would scarcely bring Peter de Laar within the range of the batteries of the Holy Inquisition to say that he is the guilty party, the real monkey, and the author of the libel as well. There is an obstinate old woman in Rome who is of the same opinion, and who avers that with her proper eyes she saw the monkey assume the shape of Bamboccio, mount a horse, and gallop away at the top of his speed; but she is at last persuaded that it was the devil she saw and not the Dutchman, and performs, in consequence, a *novéna* at the church of San Pancrazio.

Five years have nearly elapsed since Bamboccio's arrival at Rome, when he is one day agreeably surprised by the appearance of his brother, Roeland de Laar, who brings with him two more young Dutchmen (and famous ones), John and Andrew Both, who are come to study landscape under Claude Lorraine. Roeland has journeyed hither with the intention of taking his brother back to his native country; but, after the manner of the hammer which was sent to fetch the chisel, and which, in turn, required the mallet to be sent after it, Bamboccio easily persuades his brother to stay in Rome, and the four painters agree to live

merrily together. They take a roomy old house, and lead for upwards of a year the gayest, most jovial, yet most industrious bachelor life you can imagine. Alas, for the clouds that are so soon to overcast this fair sky!

One day, on a sketching excursion, and during Lent, after having filled their portfolios with sketches, they sit down by a running stream to eat their afternoon meal. The pie is good, and the wine is good, and the ample and hilarious enjoyment thereof does them, so they think, good too. Not so, however, thinks a shaven monk with a white, cowled blanket lashed round his waist by a greasy rope, feet very picturesquely sandalled but leaving something to be desired in the way of cleanliness, a thin lip, and an evil eye. He takes the artists roundly to task for eating meat in Lent, and threatens nothing less than to denounce them to the ecclesiastical authorities; whereupon Bamboccio abuses him with much humorous virulence.

"For a fellow," says Peter, "who recommends abstinence, you keep no Lent in wine, Father Baldpate, to judge by your ruby snout."

"Wine, in moderation, is sent by Providence for the use of man," answers the monk sententiously.

"And water wherewith to dilute it," cries Bamboccio, with an ominous glance at the running stream. "Did you ever do penance, old shaveling?"

"When I sin, as you do," responds the monk.

"Well," says Bamboccio, "you must have sinned during the last two minutes, and you shall do penance now. What say you, brothers?" he adds, turning to his three companions, and glancing at the stream again.

A clamorous cry of acquiescence in his proposition greets him. The monk endeavours to beat a retreat; but Peter, with a great Dutch oath, swears he shall do penance, and, catching him by the cowl and waistband, throws him clean into the water.

"When he has washed out a few of his sins," he says, laughing, "we will fish him out."

But the current is rapid and the stream is deep, and the monk never is fished out again. He is drowned.

Bamboccio and his accomplices are in consternation; some counsel one thing, some another, but all at length agree to set off immediately on their return to Holland.

From that fatal day Peter de Laar becomes another man. The shadow of the monk is always before him. At Amsterdam, at Haarlem, at Dordt, at Utrecht, where his paintings are held in great request and are munificently paid for, he lives extravagantly, and is as boisterous a boon companion as of old; but his laugh loses its heartiness, and his eye grows dull and his cheek haggard. It is the Monk. He avoids the companions and accomplices of his crime, even his favourite brother Roeland.

In the year 1650, Andrew Both drowns himself in a canal at Venice. It is the Monk.

In the year 1660, John Both perishes in the water at Utrecht. It is the Monk.

In the year 1663, Roeland de Laar crossing a wooden bridge, the ass on which he is mounted stumbles: he is precipitated into the torrent beneath, and is drowned. It is the Monk.

In the year 1675, Peter de Laar having come to be more than sixty years of age, a miserable, infirm, sombre old man, ruined in health by excesses, impoverished in purse, eclipsed in fame by the rising star of Wouvermans, is found drowned in a well at Haarlem. It is the Monk.

So they that smite with the sword perish by the sword; and I shut up Pilkington and the Shadows fade away.

II.

Our Doubles.

MY philosophy makes no pretence to be elucidative or doctrinal; it is humbly suggestive. I do not presume to explain or to advise; I only crave the liberty, timidly and respectfully, to hint.

My philosophy, like the attire of a beggar, is ragged. It is disjointed, threadbare, looped and windowed with the holes that have been picked in it; patched, pinned instead of buttoned; flimsy and unsubstantial, and, consequently, undeserving (as all rags must be) of respect. But it may serve to wile away some ten minutes or so, even as a tattered little wretch was wont, in the days of long stages, to amuse the outside passengers by keeping pace with the "spanking tits," for the contingent reversion of a halfpenny; and as, in our own times, forlorn little street Arabs turn the somersaults known as "cartwheels" in the mud, for the amusement of the occupants of omnibus "knife-boards."

I have been philosophising lately, after my poor manner, on the dualities of men and women, on the faculty we all have, more or less, for casting our skin—for being one man abroad and another at home; one character for the footlights, and another for the greenroom; of the marvellous capacity with which we are all gifted, in greater or smaller proportions, for playing a part, and not only for playing one radically and fundamentally different from the part we enact in private life, but for playing it simultaneously with the other, and for being (to use a very trite and imperfect Malapropism) two gentlemen at once. Everybody, so it seems to me, can be, and is, somebody else.

You know this already, you may say, reader; but you will not

be angry with me for telling you what you knew before. To be told what we know, flatters our self-love, and makes us think, with some self-gratulation, of what sharp fellows we are; but to be told that which we don't know generally wounds our vanity or excites our scepticism, and inclines us to a suspicion that our informant, although doubtless a well-informed person, is playing upon our credulity or making sport of our ignorance. You will, perhaps, object that in my theory of corporeal duality (I don't hint at the duality of the mind, for that is a subject above my reach, and above my ken), I am but giving another name to the hypocrisy of mankind. But the duality I mean is not always hypocritical. The double man is frequently unconscious of his duality. He is as sincere in one part as he is in the other, and believes himself just as firmly to be the person he is representing, as an accomplished actress, such as Miss O'Neil, would shed real, scalding tears, and sob out words that came really from the heart; or as tipsy Manager Elliston, in the height and glory, the tinsel and Dutch metal intoxication of a cardboard coronation, thought himself George the Fourth in reality, and blessed his people with vinous solemnity and sincerity.

If people would place a little more credence in this duality, this Siamese-twin quality of their neighbours and of themselves, they would be more tolerant; they would not accuse of unblushing disregard of truth the gentleman who, when they had knocked at his door, entered his hall, and felt his oilcloth beneath their very feet, called, himself, over the banisters, that he was not at home. Mr. Smith, they might thus reason, the working, novel-writing, statistic-hatching, or simply lazy and dun-hating Mr. Smith, may certainly be, and is, on the first floor landing; but the other Mr. Smith, his double, who has time to spare, and likes morning calls, and can conveniently settle the little bill his visitors may have called about, is not at home. He is a hundred miles away. He has just stepped out. It is uncertain when he will return. Duality, properly understood, would, like charity, cover a multitude of sins.

Some men are double willingly, knowingly, and with premeditation—they can be both wolves and lambs; and with these duplex

persons, most frequently the lamb's face is the mask, and the wolf's the genuine article. Many put on masquerade knowingly but *un*willingly, and curse the mask and domino while they wear them. A great many wear double skins unconsciously, and would be surprised if you were to tell them that they once were some one else than what they are now, and that they have still another skin beneath the masquerading one. Of such is the ploughboy, over whose uncouth limbs has been dragged, slowly and painfully, a tightly fitting garment of discipline and drill. Of such is the schoolmaster who has a cricket-loving, child-petting, laughter-exciting, joke-cracking skin for inmost covering, but is swathed without in parchment bands of authority and stern words—bands scribbled over with declensions and perfects forming in *avi*, stained with ink, dusty with the powder of slate pencils, stockaded with *chevaux-de-frise* of cane and birch. There is the duality donned by the exigency of position. The fat man who knows himself inwardly, and is notoriously at home a ninny, yet, awake to the responsibility of a cocked hat, staff and gold-laced coat, frowns himself into the semblance of the most austere of beadles, is a most double-faced individual. Necessity is the mother not only of invention, but of duality in men; and habit is the great wet nurse. She suckles the twins, and sends them forth into the world.

Look at Lord de Rougecoffer, Secretary of the department of State for no matter what affairs, and see how double a man habit has made him. To look at him, throning on the Treasury bench, you would think that nothing less than the great cauldron of broth political could simmer and bubble beneath his hat, and that the domestic *pot-au-feu* could find no place there. To hear him pleading with all the majesty of official eloquence the cause of tapeism, irremediably crushing into an inert and shapeless mass her Majesty's Opposition on the other side of the house (he has been crushed himself, many a time, when *he* sat opposite, and is none the worse for the crushing at this hour); sonorously rapping the tin box of office, zealously coughing down injudicious grievance-mongers, nay, even winking at his subordinates while they imitate the cries of the inferior animals, for the better carrying on

of the Government of which he is a member: to watch the wearying and laborious course of his official life, the treadmill industry to which he is daily and nightly doomed, the matter-of-fact phraseology and action to which he is confined: to observe all this you might think that he was a mere incarnation of Hansard's Debates, Babbage's calculating machines, and Walkingame's Tutor's Assistant, indefinitely multiplied; that his bowels were of red tape, his blood of liquified sealing-wax, his brain a pulp of mashed blue-books.

Yet this Lord de Rougecoffer of Downing Street, the Treasury bench, and the division-lobby, this crusher of Opposition and pooh-pooher of deputations, and stifler of grievances, has a double in Belgrave Square, enthusiastically devoted to the acquisition of Raphaels, Correggios, Dresden china and Etruscan vases; a double so thoroughly a *magister coquinæ* that he seriously contemplates writing a cookery-book some day, at his leisure—but he will know no leisure, on this side the grave, until he is made a Peer, or is paralysed—a double enjoying Punch, and with an acknowledged partiality for Ethiopian serenaders; a double at a beautiful park down in Hampshire, who is regarded as an oracle on all matters connected with agriculture by ill-used and ruined gentlemen with top-boots and heavy gold-chains; who has a taste almost amounting to a foible for the cultivation of exotic flowering plants; a double who is the delight of the smaller branches of a large family; who can do the doll trick to a nicety, make plum-puddings in his hat, cut an orange into a perfect Chinese puzzle of shapes, and make as excellent a "back" at leap-frog as any young gentleman from the ages of eight to twelve, inclusive, could desire.

The Lord in Downing Street rolls out statistics by the column; the Lord in Belgrave Square is an indifferent hand at counting at whist, and never could understand a betting-book. The Lord in private life is a nobleman of unimpeachable veracity, of unquestioned candour and sincerity, and enjoys the possession of an excellent memory; the Lord in St. Stephen's confidently affirms black to be white, shuffles, prevaricates, and backs out of obligations in an unseemly manner, and has a convenient forgetfulness

of what he has said or done, and what he ought and has promised to say or do, which is really surprising.

Habit gives a double cuticle to Mr. John Trett (of the firm of Tare and Trett) of the city of London, shipbroker. One Mr. Trett is a morose despot, with a fierce whisker, a malevolent white neckcloth, and a lowering eye. He is the terror of his clerks, the bane of ship-captains, the bugbear of the Jerusalem coffee-house. His surly talk is of ships that ought not to have come home in ballast, and underwriters on whom he will be "down;" of confounded owners, of freights not worth twopence, of ships gone to the dogs, and customers not worth working for. He is a hard man, and those who serve him, he says, do not earn their salt. He is a temperate man, and refuses chop-and-sherry invitations with scorn. He is a shabbily dressed man, and groans at the hardness of the times; yet he has a double at Dalston worth fifty thousand pounds—the merriest, most jovial, chirruping, middle-aged gentleman, with the handsomest house, the most attached servants, the largest assortment of comic albums and scrap books, and the prettiest daughters that eyes could wish to behold.

He is something more than an amateur on the violoncello, although Giuseppe Pizzicato, from Genoa, was last week brought to Guildhall, at the complaint of Mr. Trett's double, charged with outraging the tranquility of Copperbottom Court, Threadneedle Street, where the shipbrokers have their offices, by the performance of airs from "Don Giovanni" on the hurdy-gurdy. East of Temple Bar Trett abhors the juice of the grape; at Dalston he has an undeniable taste for old port, and is irresistible in the proposition of "another bottle." It is quite a sight, when he insists on fetching this same "other bottle" from some peculiar and only-to-himself known bin, to see him emerging from the cellar beaming with smiles, cobwebs, and old port wine. He is an excellent father, a liberal master, a jewel of a man at Dalston: only beware of him in Copperbottom Court. Temple Bar is the scarifier that performs the flaying operation upon him, and trust me, the under city skin is a rough and a hard one.

When you walk into Lincoln's Inn old square, and up the

rotten staircase (worn with despairing clients' footsteps) of No. 202; when you read on a scowling door an inscription purporting that it is the entrance to Messrs. Harrow and Wrench's offices; when, opening that door, which creaks on its hinges as though clients were being squeezed behind it, you push open the inner portal of baize, which yields with a softness equal to the velvet of a cat's paw; when you have waited a sufficient time in the outer office, and shuddered at the pale and sallow-visaged runners, and the ghastly Law Almanack, like Charles the First's death warrant, in a black frame, and listened to the grim music of the busy-writing clerks, scoring the doom of clients on parchment cut from clients' skins, with pens trimmed from clients' feathers, with ink distilled from clients' blood, tempered with the gall of law (as all these matters appear to you); when you are at last admitted to the inner sanctum, and to an interview with Mr. Harrow; when, as a debtor, you have begged for time, for lenity, for mercy, and have been refused; or, as a creditor, listened to Mr. Harrow's bland promises to sell Brown up, to seize Jones's sticks, to take care that Smith does not pass his last examination, to serve Tompkins with a *ne exeat*, and to sue out process of outlawry against Robinson; when you have paid a bill of costs, or have been presented with one which you have not the remotest chance of paying; when you have sustained all the misery and madness of the law's delay, and all the insolence of the office, you will very probably descend the staircase, commending the whole temple of injustice, cruelty, and chicane, to Ahriman and other demoniacal persons. Mr. Harrow will seem to you an embodied ghoul; Mr. Wrench, a vampire, with a whole faggot of legal sticks and staves through what *ought* to be his heart, but *is* a rule to show cause. The scribbling clerks, the tallow-visaged runners, the greasy process-servers, the villainous bailiff's followers snuffing up the scent of a debtor to be trapped from the instructions of a clerk—all these will appear to you cannibals, blood-suckers, venomous reptiles, hating their fellow-creatures, and a-hungered for their entrails.

Yet, all these useful members of society are dualities; they have all their doubles. Mr. Harrow leaves his inexorable severity, his

savage appetite for prey on his faded green-baize table. In Guildford Street, Russell Square, he gives delightful evening parties, loses his money at cards with charming complacency, and is never proof against petitions for new bonnets from his daughters, for autumn excursions from his wife, for ten-pound notes from his son at Cambridge. Mr. Wrench (who more particularly looks after the selling-up and scarifying business) is an active member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals, and is quite a "Man of Ross" among the poor crossing-sweepers in the neighbourhood of his residence. The chief clerk (who has the keenest nose and sharpest talon for a recalcitrant bankrupt of any managing clerk in the square) keeps rabbits, portioned his laundress's daughter when she married, and always weeps when he goes to the play, and the "Rent Day" is performed. The clerks who write the doom of clients, the runners, the process-servers, leave their deadly cunning, and remorseless writs, and life-destroying processes in their desks and blue bags and greasy leathern pouches—they leave their skins behind too—and, after office-hours, are joyous boon companions, irreproachable husbands in small suburban cottages, sweethearts leaving nothing to be desired, free-hearted roysterers always willing to be their twopence to another's twopence, men and brothers feeling another's woe, hiding the faults they see, showing mercy, inter-aiding and assisting each other.

And, believe me, this species of duality is not the most uncommon. The butcher *is*, nine times out of ten, kind-hearted and peaceable at home; Sanson, the executioner, had a passion for the cultivation of flowers, and played prettily on the piano; General Haynau, I dare say (for the sake of argument, at least), was a "love" of an old gentleman in private life, with *such* "loves" of gray moustachios, and *so* full of anecdote!* Do you think the tiger is always savage and brutal in domestic life; that the hyena

* I really met the General at a German watering place, and found him the pet of the table-d'hôte, and an immense favourite with the ladies. He once won a very large sum at Hombourg, and on his departure, gave a handsome percentage of his winnings to the poor.

does not laugh good-humouredly in the bosom of his family; that the wolf can't be sociable? No such thing. I dare say that clouds do sometimes obscure the zoological felicity; that Mrs. Tiger occasionally complains, should the antelope be tough or the marrow scanty; that Miss Hyena may lament the hardness of the times and the scarcity of carrion; and that Mr. Lupus may do worse than he expected during the winter; but I think the wild beasts can't be always howling, and yelling, and craunching, and tearing at home!

We grow so accustomed to see people in one character and costume, that we can scarcely fancy the possibility of that duality they certainly possess. For us the lion must be always lying in a hole under a rock, waiting for a traveller. We ignore his duality, the lion at home. We have grown so accustomed to a Mr. Phelps in a spangled Roman toga, or a Mr. Buckstone in a skyblue coat and scanty nankeen trousers, that we can't fancy those admired actors in private life, save in theatrical costumes, asking for beer in blank verse, in the first case; throwing the spectators in convulsions of laughter by poking the fire in the second.

We so mix up double men, and double dresses, and double avocations, that we fail to recognise even persons with whom we are familiar when they have laid the state dress and state character aside, and walk abroad plain men. We see a quiet-looking gentleman in plain black cheapening asparagus in Covent Garden Market, and we are told that he is the Speaker of the House of Commons. Where are his bagwig, and his mace, that he should use as a walking-stick, or, at least, carry under his arm like an umbrella? Where is his three-cornered hat, with which he accomplishes those curious hanky-panky tricks in counting members? We are shown a stout gentleman in a white hat and a cut-away coat close to a handsome quiet-looking man, smoking a cigar, and are told that one designed the Crystal Palace, and that the other raised the Britannia Bridge. Where are their compasses, their rules, their squares? Why don't they walk about the streets with their hands thrust in their waistcoats, their hair thrown back, and their eyes in a fine frenzy rolling?

Without going quite so far as the boy who believed that every judge was born with a wig on his head and ermine on his shoulders, can you, can I, fancy a judge in a jacket and wide-awake hat? or, again, a judge in opera tights and a crush hat exchanging fisticuffs with a dandy in the stalls of Her Majesty's theatres? Is there not something incongruous and inharmonious in the realisation of the picture of an archbishop in a linsey-woolsey nightcap? We can fancy a burglar cleaning his dark lantern, oiling his centre-bit, loading his pistols; but can we fancy him tending his sick wife, or playing with his children?

It may be the ruling habit, after all, and not the ruling passion, that is strong in death. The schoolmaster who directed his school to "dismiss," the judge who sent the jury to consider of their verdict, the warrior who murmured "*tête d'armée*," the mathematician who gave the square of twelve, the jester who said "drop the curtain, the farce is over"—all these responded more to some watchword of habit than of a predominant passion. Doctor Black, though an excellent schoolmaster, can hardly be said to have had a *passion* for teaching boys their accidence; it was, perhaps, more the habit of the judge to sum up evidence for the jury, than his passion; although Napoleon certainly had a passion for war, the mathematician (I forget his name) was habituated to arithmetical exercises, and gave the square of twelve through the force of habit; and as for the jester, as for Francis Rabelais, he was, for all his strange wild talk, a just and pious man; and it must have been the form, rather than the spirit, of a jest that he is said to have uttered in his last moments. Among the instances where the ruling passion does really seem to have been strong in death, those of the miser who wished the candle to be extinguished, as "he could die in the dark;" and the Highland Cateran * who objected to extreme unction as an "unco' waste of ulzie;" seem to me the most worthy of notice, though I am afraid the foundation on which their authenticity rests is rather dubious.

* Rob Roy.

III.

The Shadow of Day and Night.

AS most of us have our Doubles, so, in many noticeable lives, there are a Day and Night so wonderfully contrasted, so strikingly opposed, so picturesque in their opposition to each other, that there can be few more remarkable subjects for consideration.

Let me recall a few such Days and Nights.

The weather is sultry, scorching, though there are banks of heavy clouds in the sky. A hot wind shakes the strangely-shaped leaves of gaunt trees fitfully to and fro, or agitates tufts of brushwood and furze, rankly luxuriant, which grow here and there on the gray rocks. There are sudden declivities, and more rocks beyond, furrowed, scarred, and seamed by tears of brine. On every side beyond, as far as the strained eye can reach, is the interminable Sea. There are birds overhead with sullen flapping wings, and insects and reptiles of strange shape beneath. In a mean house, with whitewashed walls, and crazy Venetian blinds, with paltry furniture strangely diversified by rich pieces of plate and jewellers' ware, is a man in a bath, with a Madras handkerchief tied round his head. Anon he is dressed by his servants, with whom he is peevish and fretful. He grumbles with the coffee at breakfast, abuses his attendants, begins a dozen things and does not accomplish one. Now he is in his garden: you will observe that he is short, stout, sallow, and with a discontented expression of countenance. He wears a large straw hat, a white jacket and trousers, a checked shirt, and has a black handkerchief knotted round his neck. He takes up a book, and throws it down, a newspaper, and casts it aside. He is idle and loathes

his idleness. Through an open window you may look into his plain study, of which the walls are covered with striped paper. You may see hanging there a portrait of a little child and a map of the world.

Who may this man be? What was he? A testy East India captain with a liver complaint, a disappointed indigo planter, a crusty widower with a lagging Chancery suit? No. It is Night now, but Day was. Twelve years before he stood on the steps of a throne in Nôtre Dame with the Pontiff of the Catholic church behind him, with the dignitaries of that church, the princes of his empire, the marshals of his armies, the sages of his tribunals, the ladies of his court, the flower of his subjects on his right hand and on his left. He was arrayed in velvet, satin and gold, laurels on his head and a sceptre in his hand. He was Napoleon the Great, Emperor and King; now he is the outlaw of Europe, the Ogre of his former subjects, the scoff of the *Quarterly Review*, the hated, bankrupt, captive, despot General Bonaparte, a prisoner at St. Helena, at the beck and call of an English orderly officer. The portrait of the little child is that of the King of Rome, whose melancholy double, the pale young man in a white coat, is to be Metternichised in Vienna yonder, and the map is of the World which was to have been his inheritance.

Again. We are in the pit of an Italian theatre. Wax tapers, in bell-shaped shades, flare round the dress circle, for we are in the eighteenth century, and as yet gas and fishtail burners are not. Gaudy frescoes decorate the front of the tiers of boxes; the palisade of the orchestra is surmounted with a spiked railing; the occupants of the pit, in which there are no seats, wear cocked hats and wigs; and, in the dress circle, the beaux sport laced ruffles and sparkling-hilted swords, and the belles powder and patches. In one of the proscenium-boxes is the Grand Duke, sitting, imposing, in embroidery; behind him are his suite, standing humble in ditto. The corresponding box on the other side of the proscenium is empty. The first act of the opera is over, and an intermediary ballet is being performed. An impossible shepherd, in blue satin trunks, a cauliflower wig, and

carrying a golden crook, makes choregraphic overtures, to live with him and be his love, to an apocryphal shepherdess in a *robe Pompadour* and hair powder. You would see such a pair nowhere else save in Arcadia, or in Wardour Street, and in Dresden china. More shepherds and shepherdesses execute pastoral gambadoes, and the divertissement is over. Then commences the second act of the opera.

About this time, verging on half-past nine in the evening, you hear the door of the vacant private box open. An easy chair is brought down to the front, and a book of the opera, a bottle of essences, and a golden snuff-box are placed upon the ledge before it. Anon enters unto these an infirm, staggering, broken-looking old man, with a splendid dress hanging in slovenly magnificence on his half-palsied limbs. He has a bloated countenance, marbled with purple stains, a heavy eyelid and a bloodshot eye that once must have been bright blue. Every feature is shattered, weary, drooping, and flaccid. Every nerve is unstrung: the man is a wreck, and an unsightly one. His flabby hands are covered with rings, a crumpled blue ribbon crosses his breast, and round his neck hangs another ribbon, from which dangles something that sparkles, like a diamond star. Finally, he is more than three parts inebriated. It is easy to understand *that* from his unsteady hand, from the dozing torpor into which he occasionally falls, from the querulous incoherence of his speech, from the anxiety manifested by the thin, pale, old men in uniform, with the cross of a commander of Saint Louis, and the hard-featured gentlemen with silver thistles in their cravats, who stand on either side of their master, and seem momentarily to fear that he will fall out of his chair.

The beaux and belles in the dress circle do not seem to express much curiosity at the advent of this intoxicated gentleman. They merely whisper "*E' il Signore Cavaliere:* he is very far gone to-night," or words to that effect. The spectacle is no novelty. The opera is that most beautiful one by Gluck, "Orfeo." The Orpheus of the evening, in a Grecian tunic, but bewigged and powdered according to orthodoxy, is singing the sublime lament.

"*Che farò senza Euridice.*" The beautiful wailing melody floats upwards, and for a moment the belles forget to flirt, and the beaux to swagger. Cambric handkerchiefs are used for other purposes than to assure the owner that the rouge on the cheeks holds fast, and is not coming off. What is the slovenly magnifico opposite the Grand Duke doing? During the prelude he was nodding his head and breathing stertorously; but as the song proceeds, he sits erect in his chair; his blue eye dilates; a score of years of seams and furrows on his brows and cheeks vanish: he is a Man. But the strain concludes, and his Excellency bursts into a fit of maudlin weeping, and has recourse to the bottle of essences.

His Excellency has not spent a pleasant day. He has been bullied by his chaplain, snubbed by his chamberlain, and has had a deadly quarrel with his favourite. Moreover his dinner has disagreed with him, and he has drunk a great deal more, both before and after it, than was good for him. Are these tears merely the offspring of whimpering drunkenness, or has the music touched some responsive chord of the cracked lyre, sent some thoughts of what he was through his poor hazy brain clouded with wine of Alicant and strong waters? Have the strains he has heard to-night some mysterious connection (as only music can have) with his youth, his dead happiness, his hopes crushed for ever?—with the days when he was Charles Edward Stuart, pretending to the Crown of England—when he rode through the streets of Edinburgh at the head of the clans amid the crooning of bagpipes, the shouts of his partisans, the waving of silken banners 'broidered by the white hands of noble ladies? "*Non sum qualis eram,*" his chaplain will tell him; but, ah me! what a sorry evening is this to so bright a morning!

To come nearer home: the good Queen Anne reigns in England, and an enthusiastic phalanx of High Church ragamuffins have just been bellowing round the Queen's sedan chair, "God save your Majesty and Doctor Sacheverell." There are a great many country gentlemen in town, for term is just on, and the cause list is full. A white-haired patriarch in extreme old age,

who has been subpœnaed on some trial, has strolled from Westminster Hall, and entered the House of Lords, where he stands peering curiously at the carved roof, the dingy tapestry, and scarlet-covered woolsack. He is one of those men in whose whole apparel and bearing you seem to read farmer, as in another man's you will read thief. His snowy white locks, his ruddy, sunburnt, freckled countenance carved into a thousand wrinkles, like a Nuremberg nut-cracker, tell of hale, hearty old age. You may read farmer in his flapped felt hat and long duffel coat; in his scarlet-flapped waistcoat and boots of untanned leather, his stout ashen staff, with a crutch and leathern strap. His full clear eye, his pleasant smile, his jaunty, though feeble bearing, say clearly farmer—a well-to-do, Queen-loving, God-fearing old agriculturist. His life has probably passed in peace and comfort, and when he dies he will sleep in the green churchyard where his fore-elder sleep.

Here is a London gentleman who accosts him—a coffee-house wit, a buck skilled in the nice conduct of a clouded cane. He patronises the old farmer, and undertakes to show him the lions of the place. This is the door leading to my Lord Chancellor's robing-room; from behind that curtain enters Her Majesty; there is the gallery for the peeresses; there the bar. Is he not astonished? Is not the place magnificent? Being from the country ("Shocking Bœotian," says the buck compassionately to himself) he has probably never been in the House of Lords before. The old man raises his stick, and points it, tremulously, towards where, blazing in crimson velvet, embroidery, and gold, is the Throne. "Never," he answers, "since I sat in that chair!" The old farmer's double was Richard Cromwell, whilom Lord Protector of England.

Here is a placid-looking little old man, trotting briskly down John Street, Tottenham Court Road. He is about seventy, apparently, but walks erect. He has a natty little three-cornered hat, a well-brushed black suit, rather white at the seams, gray silk stockings, and silver buckles in his shoes. Two powdered *ailes de pigeon* give relief to his simple good-humoured countenance, and

his hair is gathered behind into a neat pigtail, which leaves a meandering line of powder on the back of his coat. His linen is very white, so are his hands, on one of the fingers of which he wears a ring of price. He lodges in a little street in the neighbourhood I have mentioned, pays his rent regularly, has frequent friendly chats with the book-stall keepers, to whom he is an excellent customer, and with whom he is highly popular; pats all the children on the head, and smiles affably at the maid-servants. The neighbours set him down as a retired schoolmaster, a half-pay navy purser, or, perhaps, a widower with a small independence. At any rate, he is a pleasant body, and quite the gentleman.

This is about the close of his Day. Would you like to know his Night? Read the Old Bailey Sessions Paper: ask the Bow Street officers, who have been tracking him for years, and have captured him at last; who are carrying him handcuffed to Newgate, to stand his trial for Murder. His double was Governor Wall, commandant of Goree, who was hanged for the murder of Serjeant Armstrong, whom he caused to be flogged to death, very strongly adjuring the negro who inflicted the torture, to cut the victim's liver out.

But I should never end were I to notice a tithe of the Days and Nights that flit across this paper while I write. A paralytic old octogenarian, drivelling, idiotic, and who, of all the passions of his other self has preserved but one—the most grovelling avarice—hobbles across a room, and, glancing at himself in a mirror, mutters, "That was once a man." The man was John Churchill, Duke of Marlborough. A moping invalid, imbecile and speechless, dozing in an armchair, sees a servant endeavouring to break an obstinate lump of coal in the grate; "It's a stone, you blackguard!" he cries; and these are the first words he has spoken for years—the first that have passed his lips since the Day shone no more on Jonathan Swift, Dean of St. Patrick's.

Anon, a shrivelled little dotard, with a bald head and a yellow face, clad in a nightcap, drawers, and slippers, comes grimacing to my desk, and tells me that although it is Night now, he, Louis the Fourteenth, had his Day—*Ludovicus Magnus* of the Porte

St. Denis, Louis le Grand in the Gallery of Versailles, in a towering perruque and high-heeled shoes, giving laws to princes. A mincing gentleman in powder, with an olive, or rather sea-green, complexion, with a sky-blue coat, a waistcoat lined with rose-coloured satin, and silk stockings, and with an air something between a dandy and a dancing-master, tells me that, when alive, he lived over an upholsterer's shop, in the Rue St. Honoré ; that he was frugal, just, and incorruptible ; that he was beloved by his landlord and landlady ; but that he had a double of the Convention and of the Committee of Public Safety ; a double who swam in the blood of all that was great and noble in France ; a double whose name was Maximilian Robespierre.

O Day and Night, but this is wondrous strange !

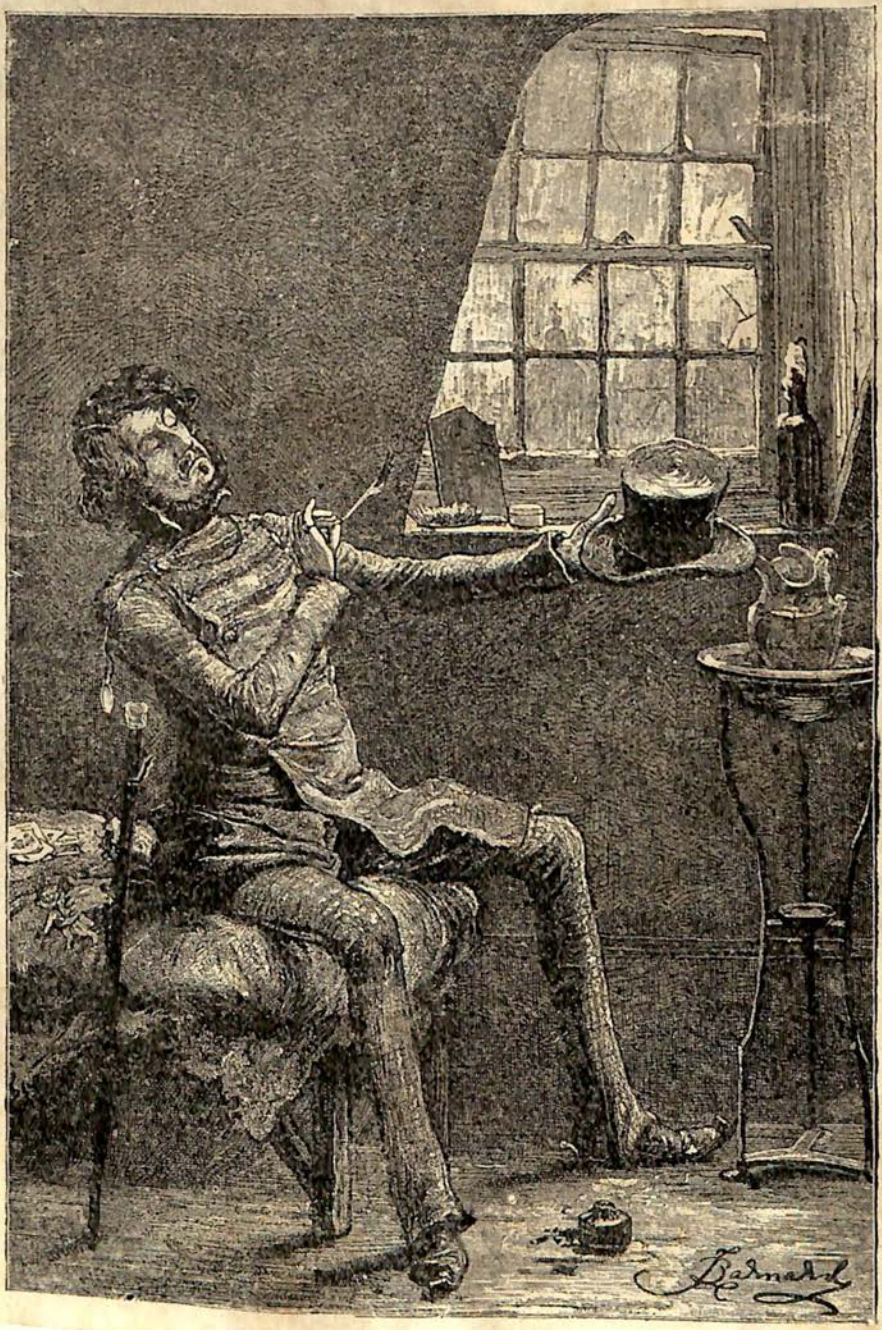
IV.

The Golden Calf.

READER, were you ever in—

I have a difficulty in expressing the word. Four little letters would serve my turn; but I dare not—this being above all for Household eyes—write them down. I might say Tophet, Hades, the place that is said to be paved with good intentions, the locality where old maids lead specimens of the simious race, Purgatory, L'Inferno, Tartarus, the debateable land where Telemachus (under the guidance of good Archbishop Fenélon, taking the pseudonym of Mentor) went to seek for Ulysses—all sorts of things—but none of them would come up in terseness and comprehensiveness to the name the place is really called by, and which it is really like.

Readers, were you ever in Bartholomew Lane, in the City of London. There is the wall of the Bank of England; there the Rotunda with those pleasant swing doors that with their "out" and "in" seem to bear the converse of Dante's immortal inscription; for who enters there takes Hope along with him—the hope of the residuary legatee, and the executor, and the dividend warrant bearer, and the government annuitant. There are the men who sell the dog-collars; the badly painted, well varnished pictures (did ever anybody buy one of those pictures, save perhaps a mad heir, frantic with the vanity of youthful blood to spend the old miser his grandfather's savings, and by misuse to poison good?); the spurious bronze sixpenny popguns; and the German silver pencil cases. There, above all are sold those marvellous pocket-books, with metallic pages, everlasting pencils, elastic straps, snap-locks, almanacs of the month, tables of the eclipses



GONE TO SEED.

of the moon, the tides, the price of stamps, compound interest, the rate of wages, the birthdays of the Royal Family, and the list of London bankers—those pocket-books full of artful pockets—sweetly smelling pouches—for gold, silver, or notes, that suggest inexhaustible riches; and that a man must buy if he have money, and very often does buy, being without, but hoping to have some. I have such a pocket-book to this day. It is old, greasy, flabby, white at the edges now; but it burst with banknotes once—yea, burst—the strap flying one way and the clasp the other; and on its ass-skin opening pages were memoranda of the variations of the funds.

There in the distance is Lothbury, whose very name is redolent of bullion—the dwelling-place of the golden Jones and the Loyds made of money;* of auriferous gold-heavers in dusky counting-houses, who shovel out gold and weigh sovereigns until their hands become clogged and clammy with the dirt of dross, and they wash them perforce. There is the great Mammon Club—the Stock Exchange, where bulls and bears in white hats and cut-away coats are now frantic about the chances of the Derby favourite, and the next pigeon match at the Red House;† now about three and a quarter for the account and Turkish scrip; now about a "little mare," name unknown, that can be backed to do wonderful things, anywhere, for any amount of money; but who allow no one to be frantic within the walls of their club under a subscription of ten guineas per annum; tarring, feathering, flouring, bonneting, and otherwise demolishing all those who dare to worship Mammon without a proper introduction and a proper burnt-offering.

All Bartholomew Lane smells of money. Orange tawny canvas bags; escorted Pickford vans with bullion for the Bank cellars; common-looking packing-cases full of ingots that might turn Bethnal Green into Belgravia; bankers' clerks with huge pocket-books secured by iron chains round their bodies, holding

* Jones, Loyd & Co. were a wealthy banking firm of the time, the principal of which on his retirement was created Lord Overstone.

† In Battersea Fields, where Battersea Park now is.

bills and cheques for thousands; stockbrokers, billbrokers, share-brokers, moneybrokers' offices; greasy men selling Birmingham sovereigns for a penny a piece (and a wager, of course); auctioneers, at the great roaring mart, knocking down advowsons and cures of souls to the highest bidder: there is gold everywhere in pockets, hearts, minds, souls, and strength—gold, "bright and yellow, hard and cold"—gold for bad and gold for good,—

> "Molten, graven, hammer'd and roll'd,—
> Heavy to get and light to hold,
> Now stamped with the image of Good Queen Bess,
> And now of a Bloody Mary."

But how about the place I did not care to name? This. Little reck the white-neckclothed clergymen, so demure, so smug, so unimpeachable in umbrella; the old ladies in their gray shawls and coal-scuttle bonnets; the young spendthrifts flushed with the announcement of so much money standing in their names in Consols, and eager to find brokers to sell out for them; the anomalous well-dressed, watch-chained, clean-shaven class, who seem to make it a pretext for having "business in the city" to consume bowls of soup at the Cock in Threadneedle Street, or sandwiches and sherry at Garraway's;—little do these harmless votaries of Mammon know of the existence of a sulphureous subterranean in the vicinity, where Mammon strips off his gold-placed coat and cocked hat, sends Dei Gratiâ packing, and puts on his proper livery of horns and hoofs and a tail; where the innoxious veal pie in Birch the pastry-cook's window in Cornhill casts off its crust—has four legs, horns, and a yellow coat, and stands on a pedestal—the Golden Calf—in—the place I won't mention to ears polite.

Under Capel Court, where the lame ducks, the disembodied spirits of ruined stockbrokers hover, like phantoms, on the banks of the Styx with no halfpenny to pay their ferry-boat over, there is a staircase—foul, stony, precipitous and dark—like one in a station-house, or the poor side of a debtors' prison. Such establishments have no monopoly of underground staircases like these

that lead from life and liberty to squalor, misery, and captivity. At the bottom of the staircase there is a board which some misanthropic brewer has cast into the pit (hoping to find it eventually), relative to entire porter and sparkling ales. Placards also, telling of wines and spirits, are as distinct as the gloominess of a place rivalling a coal-cellar in obscurity and a bear-pit in savagery, will allow them to be. This place is a public-house and —well, let us compromise the matter, and call it Hades.

You have very little opportunity of judging what the place is like inside. You only know that it is dark and full of smoke and men. Walls, bars, chairs, tables, drinking-vessels must be of little account when the noblest study of mankind—being, as it is well known, man—compasses you round about, a smoking, drinking, whiskered, hoarse, squabbling, shrieking crowd. Here a boastful buck, all rings and rags. Here rags in their unadulterated condition, but laced with grease and slashed with prospectuses and share-lists. Here roguery, in luck, with clothes all too new, and that will become old before their time, acting the cheap Amphytrion in beer and pipes. Here carcases without gibbets, and gibbets without carcases looking hungrily upon those who feed. Here utter broken-down misery; hunger that was once well-fed—that has lent to many, but is ashamed to borrow; perfect poverty that has no game up—no little caper—that is not "fly" to anything—that has no irons in the fire —that knows no parties—that can put you up to no first-rate moves—that is not waiting for a chance or to see its way, or something to turn up, but is only too glad to warm itself at an eleemosynary fire, and inhale the fumes of other men's tobacco, and wrap itself as in a garment with the steam of the fried onions of the more prosperous, and brood quietly in a corner of this Bartholomew Lane Hades, ever remembering that it is a beggar, and that it was once worth a hundred thousand pounds.

You that have heard of commercial manias, and that they are periodical; don't believe in their transient nature. There is always a Mania. Speculation never lulls. When thousands are

shy, sixpence halfpenny offers. Mammon tempers the wind to the shorn speculator. There is always something up. Thus in this Hades when railways are flat, there is always something to be done in gold mines. When the auriferous veins run short, there are nice little pickings to be got out of amalgamated companies for the exploitation of coal, strata of which are always found in the very nick of time somewhere where they were never heard or dreamed of before. Should the yield of the black diamond prove unremunerative, a rich vein of lead is sure to turn up at those famous Pyngwylly-Tuddyllyg mines in Wales, where lead has been promising for so many years, and has swallowed up so many thousand pounds in red gold, and driven so many Welsh squires to madness, or the Bankruptcy Court. Copper (somewhere between Honolulu and Vancouver's Island), or quicksilver (anywhere in the sou-west-by-eastern latitudes) can scarcely fail when lead is scarce.

When metals are at a discount, Land Companies; Emigration Companies; Extra-Economical Gas Companies, to give consumers gas (in their own pipes) at a penny farthing per thousand feet; Economical Funeral Companies—a shroud, a leaden coffin, mutes with silk scarves, gloves, hatbands, cake and wine, and a tombstone surmounted by a beautiful sculptured allegory of the three Graces inciting the trumpet of Fame to sound the praises of the domestic Virtues—all for three pound ten; Economical Hotel Companies—beds free, breakfasts gratis, wax candles for nothing, and no charge for waiters; Loan Societies, lending any amount of money on personal security at nominal rates of interest; Freehold Land and Building Societies, by subscribing to which (no fines, no stoppages, no entrance money) parties can become their own landlords—dwelling in houses as big as that occupied by the French Ambassador at Albert Gate, and walking fifty miles per diem if they choose, on their own land—in the short space of three months from day of enrolment; Guarantee Societies for securing merchants and bankers against dishonest clerks, landlords from non-rent paying tenants, sheep from the rot, pigs from the measles, feet from corns, drunkards from red noses,

and quiet, country parsonages from crape-masked burglars. Such and hundreds more such companies are always somehow in the market, susceptible of being quoted, advertised, and bruited about in Hades.

There are always sufficient of these evanescent "specs" afloat for appointments to be made between dingy men; for pots of beer to be called for on the strength of; for letters to be written (on the first sheet of the half quire of sleezy post, purchased with borrowed half-pence from the cheap stationer—he who also sells greengrocery and penny blacking—in Stag's Head Court); for the pot-boy to be importuned for wafers; for a Post-office Directory of the year before last to be in immense request; for postage-stamps to be desired with a mad unquenchable (ofttimes hopeless) longing; for pipes to be lit, and the unwonted extravagance of another "screw" indulged in; for pens to be anxiously bitten, gnawed, and sucked; for the thick black mud at the bottom of the greasy, battered inkstand to be patiently scraped up, as if there were indeed a Pactolus at the bottom; for intricate calculations to be made with scraps of chalk, or wet fingers on the dinted table—the old, old, flatteringly fallacious calculations that prove with such lying accuracy that where there are no proceeds the profits must be necessarily very large, that two and two infallibly make five, and that from a capital of nothing, interest of at least seventy per centum per annum must immediately accrue; for those worn, tattered, disreputable old pocket books at whose existence I have already hinted to be unbuckled and disembowelled; for the old dog's-eared bundles of foolscap to be dug up from the recesses of the old scarecrow hat with the crape round it—the hat that certainly holds, in addition, the lamentable ninepenny cotton pocket-handkerchief full of holes, and perhaps the one black worsted glove without finger-tops, and not impossibly the threepenn'orth of boiled beef for to-night's supper; for, finally the "party" to be waited for—the party who has money, and believes in the scheme; the party who is seldom punctual, and sometimes fails altogether in keeping his appointment—but when he does come produces a pleasurable sensation

in Hades by the sight of his clean shirt, unpatched boots, nappy hat, and watch-chain:—who cries out with a loud confident voice, "What are you drinking, gentlemen? Beer? Psha—have something warm;" and orders the something warm; and throws down the broad, brave five-shilling piece to pay for it; and, with his creaking boots, his shining jewellery, and big cigar-case (to say nothing of that new silk umbrella, which did it belong to the speculator in the blue goggles and check trousers opposite would be in less than half-an-hour safe in *The Times* office in Printing House Square, in the shape at least, of a five and sixpenny advertisement of the "Putative Nephews and Cousins-german Tontine and Mutual Assurance Company" provisionally registered), infuses unutterable envy of gold into ragged Hunger yonder, who whispers to unquenched Thirst his neighbour, that Tom Lotts has got hold of another good card, and what a lucky fellow he is!

Moons and stars! can anything equal the possessed state of mind of a man with a scheme? A man walks about, pulls his hair, talks folly, writes nonsense, makes a fool of himself about a fair woman. He falls enamoured of a picture, an opera tune, a poem with a new thought in it. A friend's goodness moves him quite to forget his own, till the friend turns out a rascal. A new country, city, house may engross all his admiration, observation, appreciation, till he becomes immensely bored; but give him a scheme—a project, that he thinks he can make his fortune by. Set up *that* Golden Calf on the altar of his heart, and you will never find him writing letters to *The Times* to complain of the length of Mammon's liturgy, as some short-breathed Christians do of that of the Church of England. Twenty full services a day will not be too much for him. As he walks the streets, his scheme precedes him as the pillar of cloud and fire went before the Israelites of old. When he reads the share list in the newspapers, the market prices of his company stand out in highest altitude of relief, and quote themselves in letters of burnished gold. It is a fine day in November when his scheme is at a premium; it freezes in July when it is at a discount. There are

no names in the Court Guide so aristocratic as those in his committee (with power to add to their number).

He envies no one. Nor dukes their gilded chariots, nor bucks in the parks their hundred guinea horses, nor members of clubs their Pall Mall palaces, nor M.P.'s their seats in the House; nor peers their robes, nor earls their yachts, nor mayors their chairs, nor aldermen their turtle, nor squires their broad lands, parks, and deer; nor judges their old port, nor college dons their claret and red mullet; nor bankers their parlours, nor old ladies their dividends. All these things and more will belong to him when his scheme pays. The rainbow waistcoats in the shops are ticketed expressly for his eye, to fix themselves on his remembrance till the project succeeds, and he can buy them. Mr. Benson is now manufacturing gold watches, Mr. Hoby boots, Mr. Sangster jewelled walking-sticks; Mr. Hart is new painting the Trafalgar at Greenwich, redecorating the Collingwood room, and bottling milk punch by the thousand dozen; Messrs. Hedges and Butler are laying down Champagne and Johannisberger; Messrs. Fortnum and Mason are importing truffles, *pâté-de-foie-gras*, Narbonne honey, Belgian ortolans, edible birds'-nests, and Russian caviare; Messrs. Laurie are building carriages with silver axle-boxes, and emblazoned hammer-cloths; Messrs. Day and Scott are training two-year-olds at Newmarket—all expressly for him when his scheme comes into its property, and he has twenty thousand pounds to spare in trifles.

For that good time coming, Mr. Cubitt is running up a few nine-storied houses or so down Kensington way; some half dozen members of parliament—all staunch Conservatives, of course, as befits men of property—are thinking seriously of accepting the Chiltern Hundreds; and two or three peers of the realm are going to the dogs as fast as they can, in order to be sold up, and their estates, country houses, manorial rights disposed of (in good time) to the lucky possessor of the successful scheme. Which is the philosopher's stone. Which is the latch-key to Thomas Tiddler, his ground. Which, even in abeyance, even in the topmost turret of a castle in the air, can yet comfort,

solace, soothe the schemer, making him forget hunger, thirst, cold, sleeplessness, debt, impending death. Which is Alnaschar's basket of glass, and is kicked down often into the kennel, with a great clatter, and ruin of tumblers, pepper-casters, and hopes.

Yet to have a scheme, and to believe in it is to be happy. Do you think Solomon de Caux, crazy, ragged, in the Bicêtre, did not believe that his scheme would triumph eventually, and he be sent for to Versailles, while the mad-house keeper and all unbelievers in steam-engines were to be conveyed incontinently to the galleys? Do you think that that poor worn-out loyal gentleman, the Marquis of Worcester, cared one jot for the hundreds of thousands of pounds he had lost in the king's service, while he yet had schemes and inventions, which *must* at last turn out successful, and bring him fame and fortune? Do you think that the alchemists grudged their patrimonies smouldered away in the crucible; or that the poor captain, who imagined if he did not perfectly invent the long range, was not comforted even on his death-bed, by the persuasion that the Great Mogul, the Grand Serag, the King of Oude, the Lama of Thibet, or the Tycoon of Japan, must come before life was extinct, and buy the great invention, though English Boards of Ordnance, and European potentates looked coldly upon it, for millions sterling, down? Do you think that Corney O'Gripper yonder, though ragged and penniless, is not happy while he has some old "schame" to propound, or some new one to perfect?

Corney has a most puissant and luxuriant head of hair—the only thing that is rich about him. It is a popular belief that Corney scratches his various "schames" ready made out of this head of hair as the cock in the fable did the pearl. At all events his long fingers are continually busied in the tufted recesses of his head-thatch, and as he scratches he propounds. His attire is very bad, but black. In his very worst phase of costume he was never known to wear any waistcoat than a black satin one, any coat but a swallow tail. Both these articles of apparel show much more of the lining than is consonant with our received notions of taste in

costume. From one imputation, however, they must be exempt. Numerous as are their crevices and gaps, they never disclose the existence of such an article as a shirt. On wet days the soles of his boots whistle like blackbirds, or (occasionally) oysters. He wears a black stock, the original satin fabric of which has gone away mournfully into shreds, and shows a dingy white substance beneath, wavering in appearance between sackcloth and buckram.

It is rumoured that Corney O'Gripper has been a hedge schoolmaster, a coast-guardsman, an illicit whisky-distiller, a gauger, a sapper and miner, a pawnbroker, a surgeon on the coast of Africa, a temperance lecturer, a repealer, a fishmonger, a parish clerk, an advertising agent, a servants' registry office-keeper, a supercargo, a collector of rents, a broker's man, an actor, a roulette tables keeper on a race-course, a publican, a betting office-keeper, an itinerant, a lawyer's clerk, a county court bailiff, and a life assurance actuary. He confesses himself to have been a "tacher;" also to having been in America, where he did something considerable in town-lots, in the banknotes known as shin plaisters, and where he was blown up in a Mississippi steam-boat; also to having passed twice through the Insolvent Court. His present profession, and one that he glories in, is that of a "promoter." A promoter of what? Companies. He knows of a Spanish galleon sunk in the bay of Vera Cruz, in Admiral Hosier's time, with two millions five hundred and seventy thousand pounds sterling in doubloons, pillar dollars, and golden candlesticks destined for the chapel of St. Jago of Compostella, on board. A joint-stock company is just the thing to fish her up, and secure a bonus of two hundred and forty per cent. to every one of the shareholders.

He only wants a few good men to complete the list of directors of the Great Female Moses Company, or Emporium of Ladies' Ready-made Wearing Apparel Society. Lend him sixpence and he will be enabled provisionally to register the Curing Herrings on the North-west Coast of Ireland Company. He is to be managing director of the Persons-condemned-to-Capital-Punishment Life Assurance Society; he promoted the Joint-stock Housebreakers' Investment Company; the Naval, Military,

European, and General Pickpockets' Savings Bank and Sick Fund; the Amalgamated Society for binding and illustrating Cheesemongers' and Trunkmakers' Waste-paper; the Mutual Silver Snuff-box Voting Company; the Bankrupts' Guarantee Fund; and the Insolvents' Provident Institution.

But the world has dealt hardly with him. No sooner has he promoted companies and set them on their legs, than solicitors have flouted, directors repudiated him. He has nothing left now but his inextinguishable brogue and his inexhaustible invention. He will go on promoting till he goes to utter penury, broken-downedness, and the workhouse; and let me whisper it to you, among all the wild, impossible, crazy "schames" to which the tufted head of Corney O'Gripper has given birth, there have been some not quite wanting in feasibility and success. There are at this moment companies with lofty-sounding names, with earls for chairmen—companies that spend thousands a-year in advertisements, and have grand offices in Cannon Street and branch offices in Waterloo Place—that were in the origin promoted by this poor ragged creature, who is not too proud to sit on the tap-room bench in the Hades under Capel Court, who is only too happy to borrow ninepence, and who sleeps no one knows where, and feeds on fried fish, baked potatoes, saveloys, penny ham sandwiches and meat pies, when he is lucky enough to procure those simple viands.

Thus wags the world in the place I do not care to name. I wonder what should set—humph—Hades running in my head this evening, and move me to descant upon it, for it is more than a year agone since I was there. What have the pewter pots, the rank tobacco, the shabby men, the fried beefsteaks and onions, the rummers of spirits and the sawdust of that old English Inferno in common with the pier-glass and arabesque decorated café, the marble table and crimson velvet couches where I sit—the opal-like scintillating glass of absinthe I am imbibing on the great Paris Boulevard, hard by the Café de l'Opéra? I have not been to the Bourse to-day, though I know *that* great screaming, tumbling, temple of Mammon well, and of old; its hot, reeking atmosphere; the snow-storm of torn scraps of paper on its pavement; the great

inner and outer rings where the bulls and bears offer, refuse, scream, and gesticulate at each other like madmen; the lofty galleries where crowds of idlers, mostly in blouses, lounge with crossed arms over the balustrades, lazily listening to the prodigious clamour that rises to the vaulted roof—the Kyrie-Eleison of the worshippers of Mammon; the deceptive frescoes on the cornices that look so like bas-reliefs; the ushers in uniform darting about with the course of exchange lists; the municipal guards and gendarmes; the nursery maids and children that come here for amusement (where will not nursery maids and children come?), the trebly serried ranks of private carriages, fiacres and cabriolets in the place outside. No, I have not been to the Bourse. I sit quietly smoking a penny cigar and imbibing eight sous' worth of absinthe preparatory to going to my friend Madame Busque's to dinner. Whatever can put Hades into my head this December evening, I wonder?

This. The café where I sit (I was all unconscious of it before) is Hades; and in its pier-glassed precincts from five to seven every evening, sometimes later, the adorers of the Golden Calf go through their orisons (oh, forgive me if I am free-tongued!) like the very deuce. For know you that, the Bourse being closed, the gaping for gain is by no means closed in the hearts of men. They rush to this café, hard by the Passage de l'Opéra, and get up a little Bourse of their own—an illegitimate Bourse, and one, when its members are detected in speculating, treated with considerable severity by the government. Banknotes, napoleons, and five-franc pieces are strewn on the table amidst absinthe glasses, dominoes, decanters, and cigar-ends. Moustached men lean over my shoulder and shake pencils at their opposite neighbours fiercely. Seedy men sit silent, in corners; prosperous speculators pay with shining gold. Shrieks of *Vingt-cinq, trente, quatre-vingt-cinq*, are bandied about like insults. It is the old under-Capel-Court Inferno with a few moustaches, some plate-glass, and a ribbon or two of the Legion of Honour; and as I finish my absinthe in the din, I seem to see the Golden Calf on the marble, plate-covered counter, very rampant indeed.

V.

A New Railway Line.

IF I succeed in the object I have proposed to myself in this paper, I shall consider that I am entitled to the gratitude of all poets, present and to come. For I shall have found them a new subject for verse: a discovery, I submit, as important as that of a new metal, or of a new motive power, a new pleasure, a new pattern for shawls, a new colour, or a new system of philosophy. No member of the tuneful craft; no gentleman whose eyes are in the habit of rolling in a fine frenzy; no sentimental young lady with an album, will deny that the whole present domain of poetry is exhausted—that it has been surveyed, travelled over, explored, ticketed, catalogued, classified, analysed, and used up to the last inch of ground, to the last petal of the last flower, to the last blade of grass.

Every poetical subject has been worn as threadbare as Sir John Cutler's stockings. The Sea, its blueness, depth, vastness, raininess, freedom, noisiness, calmness, darkness, and brightness; its weeds and waves and finny denizens; its laughter, wailings, sighings, and deep bellowings; the ships that sail, and the boats that dance, and the tempests that howl over it; the white-winged birds that skim above its billows; the great whales, and sharks, and monsters, to us yet unknown, that disport themselves in its lowest depths, and swinge the scaly horrors of their folded tails in its salt hiding-places; the mermaids that ply their mirrors and comb their tresses in its coral caves; the sirens that sing fathoms farther than plummet ever sounded; the jewels and gold that lie hidden in its caverns, measureless to man; the dead that

it is to give up—the Sea, and all pertaining to it, have been sung dry these thousand years. We heard the roar of its billows in the first line of the Iliad, and Mr. Mugg, the comic singer, will sing about it this very night at the North Woolwich Gardens, in connection with the Gravesend steamer, the steward, certain basins, and a boiled leg of mutton.

As for the Sun, he has had as many verses written about him as he is miles distant from the earth. His heat, brightness, roundness, and smiling face; his incorrigible propensities for getting up in the east and going to bed in the west; his obliging disposition in tipping the hills with gold, and bathing the evening sky with crimson, have all been sung. Every star in the firmament has had a stanza: Saturn's rings have all had their poesies, and Mars, Venus, and Jupiter have all been chanted. As for the poor ill-used Moon, she has been ground on every barrel-organ in Parnassus since poetry existed. Her pallid complexion, chastity or lightness of conduct, treacherous, contemplative, or secretive disposition, her silvery or sickly smile, have all been over-celebrated in verse. And everything else belonging to the sky—the clouds, murky, purple, or silver-lined; the hail, the rain, the snow, the rainbow, the wind in its circuits, the fowls that fly, and the insects that hover—they have all had their poets, and too many of them.

Is there anything new in poetry, I ask, to be said about Love? Surely that viand has been done to rags. We have it with every variety of dressing. Love and madness; love and smiles, tears, folly, crime, innocence, and charity. We have had love in a village, a palace, a cottage, a camp, a prison, and a tub. We have had the loves of pirates, highwaymen, lords and ladies, shepherds and shepherdesses; the Loves of the Angels and the Loves of the New Police. Canning was even good enough to impress the abstruse science of mathematics into the service of Poetry and Love; and to sing about the loves of ardent axioms, postulates, tangents, osculations, cissoids, conchoids, the square of the hypothenuse, asymptotes, parabolas, and conic sections—in short, all the Loves of the Triangles. Dr. Darwin gave us the

Loves of the Plants, and in the economy of vegetation we had the loves of granite rocks, argillaceous strata, noduled flints, blue clay, silica, quartz, and the limestone formation. We have had in connection with love in poetry hearts, darts, spells, wrath, despair, withering smiles, burning tears, sighs, roses, posies, pearls and other precious stones, blighted hopes, beaming eyes, misery, wretchedness, and unutterable woe.

It is too much. Everything is worn out. The whole of the flower-garden, from the brazen sunflower to the timid violet, has been exhausted long ago. All the birds in the world could never sing so loud or so long as the poets have sung about them. The bards have sung right through Lemprière's Classical Dictionary, Buffon's Natural History, Malte-Brun's Geography—for what country, city, mountain, or stream remains unsung?—and the Biographie Universelle to boot. Every hero and almost every scoundrel has had his epic. We have had the poetical Pleasures of Hope, Memory, Imagination, and Friendship; likewise the Vanity of Human Wishes, the Fallacies of Hope, and the Triumphs of Temper. The heavenly muse has sung of man's first disobedience, and the mortal fruit of the forbidden tree, that brought Death into the world and all our woes. The honest muse has arisen and sung the Man of Ross. All the battles that ever were fought—all the arms and all the men—have been celebrated in numbers. Arts, commerce, laws, learning, and our old nobility, have had their poet. Suicide has found a member of the Court of Apollo musical and morbid enough to sing self-murder; and the Corn Laws have been rescued from Blue Books and enshrined in Ballads.

Mr. Pope has called upon my Lord Bolingbroke to awake, and "expatiate free o'er all this scene of man;" and the pair have, together, passed the whole catalogue of human virtues and vices in review. Drunkenness has been sung; so has painting, so has music. Poems have been written on the Art of Poetry. The Grave has been sung. The earth, and the waters under it, and the fearsome region under that; its "adamantine chains and penal fires," its "ever-burning sulphur unconsumed," its "dark-

ness visible," its burning marl and sights of terror. We have heard the last lays of all the Last Minstrels, and the Last Man has had his say, or rather his song, under the auspices of Campbell. Money has been sung. We have had "Miss Kielmansegg and her golden leg," likewise "a song of sixpence." The harp that once hung in Tara's halls has not a string left, and nobody ought to play upon it any more.

Take instead, oh ye poets, the wires of the Electric Telegraph, and run your tuneful fingers over the chords. Sing the poetry of Railways. But what can there be of the poetical, or even of the picturesque, element in a railway? Trunk-lines, branch-lines, loop-lines, and sidings; cuttings, embankments, gradients, curves, and inclines; points, shuntings, switches, sleepers, fog-signals, and turn-tables; locomotives, break-vans, buffers, tenders, and whistles; platforms, tunnels, tubes, goods-sheds, return-tickets, axle-grease, cattle-trains, pilot-engines, time-tables, and coal-trucks; all these are eminently prosaic matter-of-fact things, determined, measured, and maintained by line and rule, by the chapter and verse of printed regulations and bye-laws signed by Directors and Secretaries, and allowed by Commissioners of Railways. Can there be any poetry in the Secretary's office; in dividends, debentures, scrip, preference shares, and deferred bonds? Is there any poetry in railway time—the atrociously matter-of-fact system of calculation that has corrupted the half-past two o'clock of the old watchman into "two thirty"? Is Bradshaw poetical? Are Messrs. Pickford or Chaplin and Horne poetical? How the deuce (I put words into my opponents' mouths) are you to get any poetry out of that dreariest combination of parallel lines, a railroad;—parallel rails, parallel posts, parallel wires, parallel stations, and parallel termini?

As if there could be anything poetical about a railroad! I hear Gusto, the great fine art critic and judge of literature, say this with a sneer, turning up his fine Roman nose meanwhile. Poetry on a railway! cries Prosycard, the man of business—nonsense! There may be some nonsensical verses or so in the books that Messrs. W. H. Smith and Son sell at their stalls at the

different stations; but poetry on or in the railway itself—ridiculous! "Poetry on the rail!" echoes Heavypace, the commercial traveller—"fudge! I travel fifteen thousand miles by railway every year. I know every line, branch, and station in Great Britain. I never saw any poetry on the rail." And a crowd of passengers, directors, shareholders, engine-drivers, guards, stokers, station-masters, signal-men, and porters, with, I am ashamed to fear, a considerable proportion of the readers of "Dutch Pictures," seem to the ears of my mind, to take up the cry, to laugh scornfully at the preposterous idea of there being possibly any such a thing as poetry connected with so matter-of-fact an institution as a railway, and to look upon me in the light of a fantastic visionary.

But I have tied myself to the stake; nailed my colours to the mast; drawn the sword and thrown away the scabbard: in fact, I have written the title of this article, and must abide the issue.

Take a Tunnel—in all its length, its utter darkness, its dank coldness and tempestuous windiness. To me a tunnel is all poetry. To be suddenly snatched away from the light of day, from the pleasant companionship of the fleecy clouds, the green fields spangled with flowers, the golden wheat, the fantastically changing embankments,—now geological, now floral, now rocky, now chalky; the hills, the valleys, and the winding streams; the high mountains in the distance, that know they are emperors of the landscape, and so wear purple robes right imperially; the silly sheep in the meadows that graze so contentedly, unwotting that John Hinds the butcher is coming down by the next train to purchase them for the slaughter-house; the little lambs that are not quite up to railway trains, their noise and bustle and smoke, yet, and that scamper nervously away, carrying their simple tails behind them; the sententious cattle that munch, and lazily watch the steam from the funnel as it breaks into fleecy rags of vapour, and then fall to munching again;—to be hurried from all these into pitchy obscurity seems to me poetical and picturesque in the extreme. It is like death in the midst of life, a sudden suspension

of vitality—the gloom and terror of the grave pouncing like a hawk upon the warmth and cheerfulness of life.

Many an ode, many a ballad could be written on that dark and gloomy tunnel—the whirring roar and scream and jar of echoes, the clanging of wheels, the strange voices that seem to make themselves heard as the train rushes through the tunnel—now in passionate supplication, now in fierce anger and loud invective, now in an infernal chorus of fiendish mirth and demoniac exultation, now in a loud and long-continued though inarticulate screech—a meaningless howl like the raving of a madman. To understand and appreciate a tunnel in its full aspect of poetic and picturesque horror, you should travel in a third-class carriage. To first and sometimes to second-class passengers the luxury of lamplight is by the gracious favour of the directors of the company condescendingly extended, and in passing through a tunnel they are enabled dimly to descry their fellow-travellers; but for the third-class voyager, darkness, both outer and inner, are provided—darkness so complete and so intense, that as we are borne invisibly on our howling way, dreadful thoughts spring up in our minds of blindness; that we have lost our sight for ever! * Vainly we endeavour to peer through the darkness, to strain our eyes to descry one ray of light, one outline—be it ever so dim—of a human figure; one thin bead of day upon a panel, a ledge, a window-sill, or a door.

Is there not matter for bards in all this?—in the length of the tunnel, its darkness and clamour; in the rage and fury of the engine eating its strong heart, burnt up by inward fire like a man consumed by his own passions; in the seemingly everlasting duration of the deprival from light and day and life, but a deprival which ends at last. Ah, how glad and welcome that restoration to sunshine is! We seem to have had a sore and dangerous sickness, and to be suddenly and graciously permitted to rise from a bed of pain and suffering, and enter at once into the enjoyment of the rudest health, with all its comforts and enjoyments, with all

* At the time this was written the lighting-up of third-class railway carriages was not obligatory on the companies.

its cheerful pleasures and happy forgetfulness of the ills that are gone, and unconsciousness of the ills that are to come, and that *must* come, and surely.

Whenever I pass through a tunnel I meditate upon these things and wish heartily that I were a poet, that I might tune my heart to sing the poetry of railway tunnels. I don't know whether the same thoughts strike other people. I suppose they do—I hope they do. It may be that I muse more on tunnels, and shape their length and blackness, and coldness and noise, to subjects fit to be wedded to immortal verse, because I happen to reside on a railway, and that almost every morning and evening throughout the week I have to pass through a tunnel of prodigious length—to say the truth, nearly as long as the Box Tunnel on the Great Western Railway. Morning and night we dash from the fair fields of Kent—from the orchards and the hop-gardens—from the sight of the noble river in the distance, with its boats and barges and huge ships, into this Erebus, pitch dark, nearly three miles long, and full of horrid noises.

Sometimes I travel in the lamp-lit carriages, and then I find it poetical to watch the flickering gleams of the sickly light upon shrouded figures, muffled closely in railway rugs and mantles and shawls—the ladies, who cower timidly in corners, the children, who, half-pleased, half-frightened, don't seem to know whether to laugh or cry, and compromise the matter by sitting with their mouths wide open, and incessantly asking why it is getting dark, and why there is such a noise. Sometimes—and, I am not ashamed to confess, much more frequently—I make my journey in the poor man's carriage—the "parly," or third-class. In that humble "parly" train, believe me, there is much more railway poetry attainable than in the more aristocratic compartments. Total darkness, more noise (for the windows are generally open, and the reverberation is consequently much greater), more mocking voices, more mystery, and more romance.

I have even gone through tunnels in those vile open standing-up cars called by an irreverent public "pig-boxes," and seemingly provided by railway directors as a cutting reproach on, and stern

punishment for, poverty. Yet I have drunk deeply of railway poetry in a "pig-box." There is something grand, there is something noble, there is something really sublime in the gradual melting away of the darkness into light; in the decadence of total eclipse and the glorious restoration of the sun to his golden rights again. Standing up in the coverless car you see strange, dim, fantastic, changing shapes above you. The daylight becomes irriguous, like dew, upon the steam from the funnel, the roofs of the carriages, the brickwork sides of the tunnel itself. But nothing is defined, nothing fixed; all the shapes are irresolute, fleeting, confused, like the events in the memory of an old man.

The tunnel becomes a phantom tube—a dry Styx—the train seems changed into Charon's boat, and the engine-driver turns into the infernal ferryman. And the end of that awful navigation must surely be Tartarus. You think so, you fancy yourself in the boat, as Dante and Virgil were in the Divine Comedy; ghosts cling to the sides, vainly repenting, uselessly lamenting; Francesca of Rimini floats despairing by; far off, mingled with the rattle of wheels, are heard the famine-wrung moans of Ugolino's children. Hark to that awful shrilly, hideous, prolonged yell—a scream like that they say that Catherine of Russia gave on her deathbed, and which, years afterwards, was wont to haunt the memories of those that had heard it. Lord be good to us! there is the scream again; it is the first scream of a lost spirit's last agony; the cry of the child of earth waking up into the Ever and Ever of pain; it is Facinata screaming in her sepulchre of flames—No, it is simply the railway whistle as the train emerges from the tunnel into sunlight again. The ghosts vanish, there are no more horrible sights and noises, no flying sparks, no red lamps at intervals like demon eyes. I turn back in the "pig-box," and look at the arched entrance to the tunnel we have just quitted. I seemed to fancy there should be an inscription over it bidding all who enter to leave hope behind; but instead of that there is simply, hard by, a placard on a post relative to cattle straying on the railway.

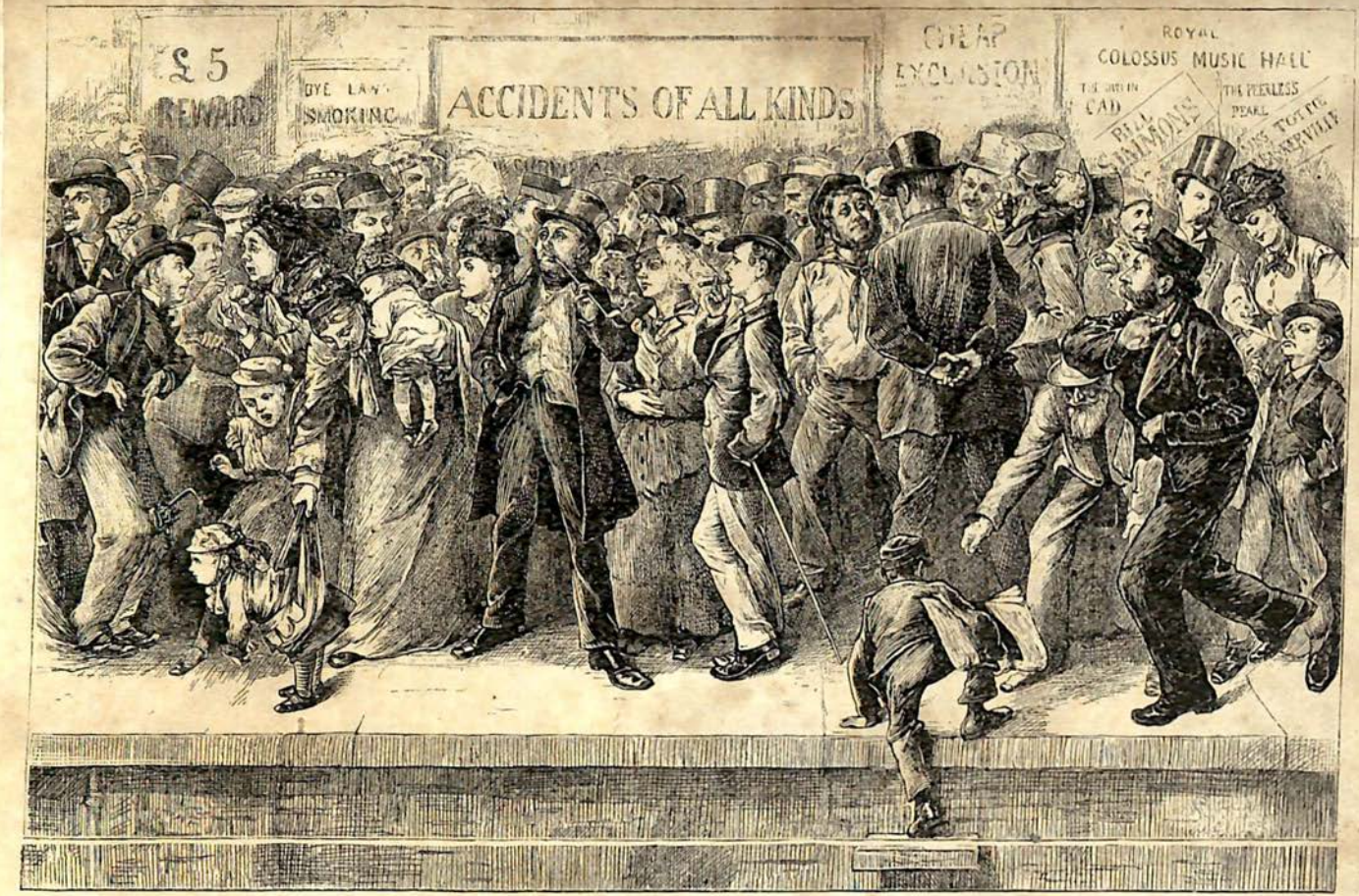
A railway accident! Ah, poets! how much of poetry could

you find in that, were you so minded! Odes and ballads, sapphics, alcaics and dactylics, strophes, choruses and semi-choruses might be sung—rugged poems, rough as the rocky numbers of Ossian, soothing poems, "soft pity to infuse," running "softly sweet in Lydian measure"—upon the woes of railway accidents, the widowhoods and orphanages that have been made by the carelessness of a driver, a faulty engine, an unturned "point," a mistaken signal. Think of the bride of yesterday, the first child of our manhood, the last child of our age; think of the dear friend who has been absent for years, who has been estranged from us by those whispering tongues that poison truth, and is coming swiftly along the iron road to be reconciled to us at last. Think of these all torn from us by a sudden, cruel, unprepared-for death; think of these, falling upon that miserable battle-field, without glory, without foes to fight with, yet with fearfuller, ghastlier hurts, with more carnage and horror in destruction than you could meet with even on those gory Chersonean battle-fields* after storms of shot and shell, after the fierce assaults of the bayonet's steel, and the trampling of the horses, and the stroke of the sharp sword.

There are bards to wail over the warrior who falls in the fray, for the horse and his rider blasted by the crimson whirlwind. There are tears and songs for the dead that the sea engulfs, to cradle them in its blue depths till Time and Death shall be no more. There are elegies and epitaphs and mourning verses for those that sleep in the churchyard, that have laid their heads upon a turf, that eat their salad from the roots, that dwell with worms, and entertain creeping things in the cells and little chambers of their eyes. There is poetry even for the murderer on his gibbet; but who cares to sing the railway victim? who bids the line restore its dead? who adjures the engine to bring back the true and brave? They are killed, and are buried; the inquest meet; the jurymen give their verdict, and forget all about it two days afterwards. Somebody is tried for manslaughter and acquitted, for, of course, there is nobody to blame.

It is all over, and the excursion train, crammed with jovial

* Around Sebastopol—in 1855.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excursionists, sweethearts, married couples, clubs of gay fellows, laughing children, baskets of prog, bottles of beer, and surreptitious, yet officially connived at, pipes; the engine dressed in ribbons, the stoker (oh, wonder!) in a clean shirt—the excursion train, I say, rattles gaily over the very place where, a month since, the Accident took place; over the very spot where the earth drank up blood, and the rails were violently wrenched and twisted, and the sleepers were ensanguined, and death and havoc and desolation were strewn all around, and the wild flowers on the embankment were scalded with the steam from the shattered boiler.

Can you form an idea, poets, of a haunted line? Suppose the same excursion train I was speaking of to be on its way home, late at night, say from Cripplegate-super-Mare or Buffington Wells. Everybody has enjoyed himself very much—the children are tired, but happy. The bonnets of the married ladies have made their proper impression upon the population of Cripplegate-super-Mare, and they are satisfied with them, their husbands, and themselves. The married gentlemen have found out of what the contents of the black bottle consisted—they smoke pipes openly now, quite defiant, if not oblivious, of bye-laws and forty-shilling fines.* Nobody objects to smoking—not even the asthmatical old gentleman in the respirator and the red comforter—not even the tall lady, with the severe countenance and the green umbrella, who took the mild fair man in spectacles so sharply to task this morning about the mild cigar which he was timidly smoking up the sleeve of his poncho. Even the guards and officials at the stations do not object to smoking. One whiskered individual of the former class—ordinarily the terror of the humble third-class passenger, whom he, with fierce contempt, designates as "you, sir," and hauls out of the carriage on the slightest provocation—condescends to be satirical on the smoke subject; he puts his head in at the window, and asks the passengers "how they like it—mild or full-flavoured?" This is a joke, and everybody, of course, laughs immensely, and goes on smoking unmolested.

* Smoking compartments for third-class passengers had no existence in these days.

Bless me! how heartily we can laugh at the jokes of people we are afraid of, or want to cringe to for a purpose.

Surely a merrier excursion train than this was never due at the Babylon Bridge Station at "eleven thirty." Funny stories are told. A little round man, in a gray coat and a hat like a sailor's, sings a comic song seven miles long, for he begins it at one station and ends it at another seven miles distant. A pretty, timorous widow is heard softly joining in the chorus of "tol de rol lol." A bilious man of melancholy mien, hitherto speechless, volunteers a humorous recitation, and promises feats of conjuring after they have passed the next station. Strangers are invited to drink out of strange bottles, and drink. Everybody is willing to take everybody's children on his knee. People pencil down addresses by the lamplight, and exchange them with people opposite, hoping that they shall become better acquainted. The select clubs of jolly fellows are very happy—they even say "vrappy." There is laughing, talking, jesting, courting, and tittering. None are silent but those who are asleep. Hurrah for this jovial excursion train, for the Nor-Nor-West-by-Eastern Railway Company, its cheap fares and admirable management!

Suppose that just at the spot where this allegro train now is, there occurred the great accident of last August.* You remember, the excursion train, through some error, the cause of which was unfortunately never discovered, ran into the luggage train! the driver and stoker of the former were dashed to pieces—thirty-three persons were killed or wounded. Suppose some man of poetical temperament, of fantastic imagination, of moody fancies, were in the carriage of this merry train to-night, looking from the window, communing with the yellow moonlight, the light clouds placidly floating along the sea of heaven as if sure of a safe anchorage at last. He knows the line, he knows the place where that grim accident was—he muses on it—yes; this was the spot, there lay the bodies.

Heavens and earth! suppose the lines were haunted! See, from a siding comes slowly, noiselessly along the rails the

* A.D. 1854.

PHANTOM TRAIN! There is no rattle of wheels, no puffing and blowing of the locomotive, only from time to time the engine whistle is heard in a fitful, murmuring, wailing gust of sound; the lamps in front burn blue, sickly lambent flames leap from the funnel and the furnace door. The carriages are lamplit too, but with corpse candles. The carriages themselves are mere skeletons—they are all shattered, dislocated, ruined, yet, by some deadly principle of cohesion, they keep together, and through the interstices of their cracking ribs and framework you see the passengers. Horrible sight to see! Some have limbs bound up in splinters, some lie on stretchers, but they have all Faces and Eyes: and the eyes and the faces, together with the phantom guard with his lantern, from which long rays of ghastly light proceed; together with the phantom driver, with his jaw bound up; the phantom stoker, who stokes with a mattock and spade, and feeds the fire as though he were making a grave; the phantom commercial travellers wrapped in shrouds for railway rugs; the pair of lovers in the first-class coupé locked in the embrace of death in which they were found after the accident; the stout old gentleman with his head in his lap; the legs of the man, the rest of whose body was never found, but who still has a face and eyes; the skeletons of horses in the horseboxes; the stacks of coffins in the luggage vans (for all is transparent, and you can see the fatal verge of the embankment beyond, through the train)—all these sights of horror flit continually past, up and down, backwards and forwards, haunting the line where the accident was.

But, ah me! these are, perhaps, but silly fancies after all. Respectability may be right, and there may be no more poetry in a railway than in my boots. Yet I should like to find poetry in everything, even in boots. I am afraid railways are *ugly*, dull, prosaic, straight; yet the line of beauty, Hogarth tells us, is a curve, and curves you may occasionally find on the straightest of railways—and where beauty is, poetry, you may be sure of it, is not far off. I am not quite sure but you may find it in ugliness too, if there be anything beautiful in your own mind.

VI.

Want Places.

CAREFULLY peruse every day the "Want Places" columns of *The Times* newspaper. As I shall presently show, I happen to know most of the advertisers, and intend to introduce them to public notice. The ladies first:—

AS HOUSEKEEPER to a nobleman or gentleman, a respectable middle-aged party, fully conversant with her duties. Unexceptionable references. Address—K. G., 3, Preserve Street, Piccallilly Gardens.

Mrs. Barbara Blundy is the "party." She is fond of mentioning, casually, that she was born in eighteen hundred and twenty, but she is, at least, fifty; stiff, starch, demure. Two bands of well-pomatumed brown hair, and two thin pendants of corkscrew ringlets, stand perpetually on duty, on either side of her severe cap, caparisoned with gray ribbons of price; Mrs. Blundy's keys and keybasket are her inseparable companions. She carries the one, and she jingles the others, with an inflexible rigidity of purpose. Her dress is of iron gray, and in it, with her iron keys, she looks like the gaoler, as she is, of the pickles and preserves; the Charon of the still-room, the Alecto of the linen-chest, the Megæra of the housemaids, the Tisiphone of domestic economy. From her waist descends a silken apron of rich but sober hues, supposed to have been originally a genuine Bandanna handkerchief, one, indeed, of a set presented to her by General Sir Bulteel Bango, K.C.B., formerly colonel of the Old Hundredth regiment (raised by Colonel Sternhold in sixteen hundred and ninety-one, and known in the Low Country campaigns as Hopkins's foot).

Mrs. Blundy wears a spray of ambiguous transparencies, accepted, by a great exertion of faith by those who pay her court, to be Irish diamonds; but which bear a stronger resemblance to the glass drops of a bygone girandole. Afternoon and evening she dons a black, stiff, rustling, silk dress—like a board, as I have heard ladies say. None of your fal-de-ral lavender boots, but rigid, unmistakable shoes of Cordovan leather, with broad sandals and stout soles. No gewgaws or vain lappets for Mrs. Blundy, when it pleases her to walk abroad; but a severe, composed, decorous, comfortable, gray plaid shawl, a real sable muff (how the cook envies it!), a drawn silk bonnet, black kid gloves of staunch Lamb's Conduit Street make, and the keys in a reticule, like a silken travelling-bag. On Sunday evening she sweeps round the corner to chapel, and "sits under" the Reverend Nahum Gillywhack (of Lady Mullington's Connection), and afterwards, perchance, condescends to partake of a neat supper of something warm at Mr. Chives's, formerly a butler, but now a greengrocer (and a widower) in Orchard Street.

When Mrs. Blundy is "suited" in a nobleman's or gentleman's family—as she was at Lady Leviathan's, in Plesiosaurus Square—she becomes a fearful and wonderful spectacle. She moves down the back stairs with the dignity of a duchess who has come that way by mistake. Yet she is profoundly humble. She hopes (oh, how humbly!) that she knows her place. To see her courtesy to Lady Leviathan you would imagine that she was wont to stand on a descending platform instead of on a square of carpet—so low did she bend. Mrs. Blundy considered Miss Poonah (governess to the Honourables Bovina and Lardina Lambert, her ladyship's eldest daughters) as a very well-behaved "young person," highly accomplished, no doubt, but with a want of "moral fitness;" an ambiguous expression which told immensely with the school-room maid, who stated that it exactly tallied with her opinion of Miss Poonah, who was, *she* should say, a "stuck-up thing."

Mrs. Blundy left Lady Leviathan's in consequence of a "difficulty" with the lady's maid respecting Mr. Chives.

Mrs. Blundy is not "suited" just now, and she is temporarily

residing at a serious butcher's, in a narrow court, behind a great church, at the West End, wherein Mr. Cuffe, the beadle, not unfrequently condescends to insert his gold-laced person, and to purchase a plump chump chop, or a succulent lamb's fry. When Mrs. Blundy is "suited" (which will be soon, for her references are unexceptionable), she will rule the roast as completely as ever. She practises, perhaps unconsciously, Frederic Barbarossa's maxim—"Who can dissimulate can reign." She will bully the still-room maid, and the footman, and heaven only help the housemaids! The terrible lectures they will have to endure on the sinfulness of ribbons, and the "unloveliness of lovelocks," the perdition of jewellery! The dismal anecdotes they will have to endure of errant housemaids who, disregarding the advice of their pastors and friends—the housekeepers—fell into evil ways, and were afterwards seen walking in the Park on Sunday, with fourteen flounces one above the other, and leaning on the arms of Life-Guardsmen. All this will be, as it has been before, when Mrs. Blundy is "suited."

To be housekeeper to a duchess is the culminating point of Mrs. Blundy's ambition. To dine with the groom of the chambers and my lord duke's steward—to have her own still-room footman behind her own still-room chair—to hear the latest Court news from her grace's lady's maid, or from Monsieur Anatole, the hair-dresser, invited in to partake of a glass of "London particular" madeira. These, with the comfortable perspective of a retiring pension, or of a stately superannuation at his grace's great show-house in Hampshire; with rich fees for showing Claudes and Petitots, Sèvres porcelain and Gobelin tapestry, to visitors. Any duchess, therefore, who may want such a person, will know where to apply.

AS HOUSEKEEPER to a Single or Invalid Gentleman, a Single Person of experience. Can be highly recommended. Address, Alpha, at Mr. Mutts', 72, Kingsgate Street, Holborn.

Attached relatives and friends of Sir Dian Lunes, Bart.—who, beyond occasional aberrations and delusions respecting his head

being a beehive, and himself heir to the throne of Great Britain, is a harmless, helpless, paralytic, bedridden old gentleman enough —may be safely assured that Alpha is the housekeeper for him —Alpha, otherwise represented by Miss Rudd.

Mr. Mutts, trunkmaker, of Kingsgate Street, Holborn, knows Miss Rudd. Does he *not?* Ugh! Who but a meek, quiet little, widowed, trunkmaker, with three daughters (grown up, and all inclined to redness at the nose), would know that terrible female, half as long as he has done? She lodges with him in the frequent intervals between her situations. "Hang her, she *do*," says Mutts to himself, as he is busy at work. And, as he says it, he gives a nail, which he fancies has a Ruddish appearance, such an exasperated rap, that Grapp, his apprentice, begins rapping at *his* nails, in professional emulation, harder than ever; and the two between them engender such a storm of raps that Mr. Ferret, the surly attorney opposite, sends across with his compliments, and really he shall be obliged to indict Mr. Mutts for a nuisance—indeed he shall.

Miss Rudd—she is tall, lanky, and bony! She has some jet ornaments, in heavy links, about her neck; but, resembling the fetters over the gate of the Old Bailey, they have not a decorative effect. She wears a faded black merino dress, the reflections from which are red with rust. Her feet are long and narrow, like canoes. Her hands, when she has those hideous black mittens on, always remind me of unboiled lobsters.

When Judith Jael Mutts, aged twenty-three years, tells her father that Miss Rudd—having left Mrs. Major Morpuss's family, in consequence of the levity of Miss Corpus, that lady's niece—is, pending her acceptance of another engagement, coming to stay a week in Kingsgate Street, the poor man breaks out into a cold perspiration—yet his daughter Judith always adds, "Really Miss Rudd is such a superior person, and has so strict a sense of her moral mission, that we should all be benefited (a glance at Mutts over his Sunday newspaper) by her stay." Mutts knows that it is all over with this said newspaper during Miss Rudd's stay, which, though announced as to be only of a week's duration, he

knows, from sad experience, will, very probably, be indefinitely protracted.

Miss Rudd's moral mission ordinarily involves an unusual tartness of temper in Mr. Mutts' three amiable daughters; it makes —on the general question of theology at meal times, and extra exposure to being "worreted"—Grapp's, the apprentice's, life a temporary burden to him. There is no rest for Mr. Mutts while the single gentleman's housekeeper is good enough to lodge with him. He is in daily perturbation lest Miss Rudd should take his state of widowerhood as a state of sin; and, willing or not willing, marry him severely. With what alacrity he carries the notification of Miss Rudd's wishes to Printing-House Square! How devoutly he hopes that the advertisement will be speedily answered!

Not only to Sir Dian Lunes, but to Thomas Tallboys, Esq. (known, when in the House, from his taciturnity, as "Mum" Tallboys), Miss Rudd would be an eligible retainer. That stiff, stern, melancholy, silent, man would find a treasure in her. Trestles, the footman, who is more than half-brother to a mute, would have a grim and silent respect for her. Her lank canoe-like shoes would go noiselessly about the stairs; into Mr. Tallboys's ghastly dining-room, where there is a Turkey carpet, of which the faded colours seem to have sunk through the floor, like spectres; into the study, where there are great bookcases of vellum-bound volumes, which seem to have turned pale with fright at the loneliness of their habitation, a view of the Street of Tombs at Pompeii, and a model of an ancient sarcophagus—the study where every morning she would find Mr. Tallboys in a dressing-gown, like a tartan winding-sheet, with a bony paper-knife cutting the leaves of the Registrar-General's returns, which he will have sent to him weekly; into the silent kitchen, where an imposing and gleaming *batterie de cuisine* (never used but twice a year) blinks lazily at the preparations for his daily chop; into the mournful housekeeper's room, garnished with unused sweets and condiments; into the strange crypts and vaults of the silent cellar, would Miss Rudd roam noiselessly, gloomily.

Mr. Tallboys will, after she has served him for a year, have the highest respect for her. "She is a person," he will write to his friend Colonel Vertebra, judge advocate of the colony of Kensalgrenia, "of singular discretion and reticence." When he dies he will leave her a considerable sum in those mortuary securities, South Sea annuities. Then, perhaps, she will espouse the grim Mr. Trestles, and conduct a dreary lodging-house in some dreary street adjoining an obsolete square; or, adhering to celibacy, retire to a neat sarcophagus cottage in the Mile-End Road, or the vicinity of Dalston.

It is a mistake to suppose that a single gentleman's housekeeper proceeds uniformly to her end—which is naturally connected with the probate duty—by means of coaxing, complaisance, and general sycophancy. Such means may be employed in certain cases, where the patient—like a man who has been addicted to opium-eating—cannot be kept up to the mark without doses of his habitual medicine, flattery. But, in nine cases out of ten, the successful treatment is composed of tyranny and intimidation. A proper impression once implanted in the mind of the single gentleman that his housekeeper is indispensable to his health and comfort, and she is safe. Her knees need be no longer hinged, her neck corrigible, her tongue oiled. The little finger of the domestic becomes a rod of iron, with which the celibatarian may be scourged, or round which he may be twisted at will. How many fierce major-generals there are, once the martinets of garrisons, who are now the submissive Helots of cross old women who cannot spell! How many Uncle Toms crouch beneath the lash of a female Legree, whom they feed and pay wages to! This is human nature. We know that we can turn Legree out of doors, and break her cowskin over her back, to-morrow; but we don't do anything of the sort.

There are many other housekeepers who want places just now. There is Mrs. Muggeridge, who is not too proud to seek a domestic appointment, in which the high art of the housekeeper is joined to the more homely avocations of the cook. As cook and housekeeper, Mrs. Muggeridge will suit genteel families in

Bloomsbury and Russell Squares, Gower Street, Mornington Crescent, or Cadogan Place. She would be just the person for the upper end of Sloane Street. She has a neat hand for cutting vegetable bouquets out of carrots, turnips, and parsnips for garnishing; also for the decorated frills of paper round the shank-bones of legs of mutton and the tops of candlesticks. She can make gooseberry fools, custards, and jellies; but, if trifles or Chantilly baskets are in question, they must be procured from the pastrycook; for Mrs. Muggeridge is genteel, but not fashionable. She is a stout, buxom woman, very clean and neat; and, to see her going round to her various tradespeople in the morning with her capacious basket and store of red account books, is a very cheerful and edifying spectacle. Mrs. Muggeridge has a husband —a meek man with a gray head and a limp white neckcloth—who is head waiter at a large hotel; but he is seldom seen at home, and is not of much account there when he is.

Then there is Mrs. Compott, who is desirous of obtaining a situation as housekeeper in a school or public establishment, and who would not object to look after the linen department. Mrs. Compott is a very hard, angular, inflexible woman, with a decidedly strong mind. She is not exactly unfeeling, but her sensibilities are blunted—not to say deadened—by the wear and tear of many boys; and such a tough integument has been formed over her finer feelings as might be supposed to be possessed by a Scotch assistant-surgeon in the navy after a sharp sequence of cock-pit practice.

At Mr. Gripforth's academy for young gentlemen, Hammersmith, she would be an invaluable scholastic housekeeper and matron. The little maladies to which schoolboys are liable—such as chicken-pox, hooping-cough, chilblains, ringworm, boils, chapped hands, and cuts—all of which ailments she classes under the generic term of "rubbage"—she treats with sudden remedies, generally efficacious, but occasionally objected to by the patient. Mr. Katarr, the visiting apothecary—a fawn-coloured young man in a shiny mackintosh, very harmless, and reputed to sustain nature by the consumption of his own stock of cough lozenges,

humected with rose water—has a high opinion of Mrs. Compott. "I will send Tumfey," he says to the principal, "another bottle of the mixture; and that, with Mrs. Compott's good care, will soon bring him round."

Have you never known a Mrs. Compott? In your young days, at Mr. Gripforth's academy, at Miss Whalebone's preparatory establishment, or Doctor Rubasore's collegiate school; where it was so essential that the pupils should be sons of gentlemen, and where you had that great fight with Andy Spring, the pork-butcher's son? Can't you remember your sycophancy to that majestic domestic for jam and late bread and butter? You could not crawl lower, now, for a Garter or a tide-waiter's place. Don't you yet feel a sort of shudder at the remembrance of Mrs. Compott's Saturday night's gymnastics with the towel, the yellow soap, the hard water, and—horror of horrors—the small-tooth comb?

Mrs. Compott is always a widow. Mr. Compott was "unfortunate," and had "a house of his own once;" but what his misfortunes or his house were is as mysterious as a cuneiform inscription. Mrs. Compott very often contracts a second marriage, and becomes Mrs. Gripforth or Mrs. Rubasore. But for such an alliance it would be inexplicable to me what that rugged, inflexible, terrible personage the schoolmaster's wife could originally have been; or how indeed schoolmasters themselves find time and opportunity to court wives. I never knew a young lady who kept company with a schoolmaster, nor was I ever at a scholastic wedding. Others may have been more fortunate.

The schoolmaster's housekeeper would not mind undertaking the superintendence of a public establishment, which may mean Somerset House, an union workhouse, a female penitentiary, or a set of chambers in the Adelphi. But she is not to that manor born: the orthodox public housekeeper is a widely different functionary. Such public establishments as chambers, public offices, warehouses, &c., are peculiarly adapted to Mrs. Tapps, married, but without incumbrance; entertaining, indeed, a small niece, who is so far from being an incumbrance that she does,

on more or less compulsion, as much work as a grown-up housemaid. Mrs. Tapps is a cloudy female, with a great deal of apron, living chiefly underground, and never without a bonnet. What her literary attainments (if any) may be I am unable to say; but for all catechetical purposes she is profoundly ignorant. She knows positively nothing upon any subject holding with the external world; less (if that were possible) about any of the lodgers or occupants of the house she dwells in. "She can't say:"—"she don't know, she's sure:"—"she's not 'aweer,'" and so on to the end of the chapter. "She'll ask the landlord." The landlord is her Alpha and her Omega. The landlord is the Grand Thibetian Llama of her creed—as mysterious and as invisible—the Cæsar to whom all appeals must be made. The landlord is all she knows or seems to know anything of.

Mrs. Tapps' niece Euphemia is also naturally reserved; of a timidity moving her to violent trembling and weeping when addressed, and afflicted moreover with an impediment in her speech. All you ordinarily see of her is a foreshortened presentment as she is scrubbing the doorsteps or the stairs—all you hear of her are the slipshod scuffling of her shoes about the house, and her stifled moans in the kitchen when being beaten by her aunt for black-leading her face instead of the stove. Mr. Tapps is a postman, or an *employé* in the docks, or a railway porter, or engaged in some avocation which necessitates his coming home every night very dirty and tired. He smokes a strong pipe and studies yesterday's newspaper till he goes to bed; but however Mrs. Tapps, and her niece, and the gaunt gray cat, and the long lean candle with the cauliflower wick, pass their time during the long winter evenings in the silent kitchen in the empty house is beyond my comprehension.

There is another public establishment which boasts a housekeeper—I mean a theatre. Spruce visitors to the boxes, jovial frequenters of the pit, noisy denizens of the gallery, little deem of—if they did they would care as little about—the existence of a dingy female, "Mrs. Smallgrove, the housekeeper," a personage well known to the stage-doorkeeper and the manager, and the

chief of that sallow, decayed, mysterious band of women called "cleaners," who poke about the private boxes and pit benches with stunted brooms and guttering candles during rehearsals, and who are dimly visible in dressing-rooms and dark passages. The people behind the scenes, actors, musicians, workmen, are conscious of the existence of these functionaries, but scarcely more. They are aware of Mrs. Smallgrove, but they do not know her. It is a question even if they are familiar with her name. She superintends the lowering of the grim brown holland cloths over the gay decorations after the performances. Where she lives is a mystery—somewhere underneath the "gravetrap" in the mezzanine floor, or high in the tackled flies, perhaps. No man regardeth her; but, when the last actor is descending from his dressing-room at night, when the last carpenter has packed up his tools to go home, the figure of the theatrical housekeeper is descried duskily looming in the distance—covering up the pianoforte in the green room, or conferring with the fireman amidst the coils of the engine hose, or upon the deserted stage, which, an hour ago, was joyous with light and life and music.

When the Theatre Royal, Hatton Garden, has a vacancy for a housekeeper it is through some occult influence—some application totally independent of the three-and-sixpenny publicity—that Mrs. Smallgrove is inducted into this situation. She may have been a decayed keeper of a wardrobe, a prompter's wife fallen upon evil days, a decrepit ballet mistress. But what her antecedents have been is doubtful, likewise the amount of her salary.

AS NURSE in a Nobleman's or Gentleman's Family, a Person of great experience in the care of Children. Can be highly recommended by several families of distinction. Address P., care of Mr. Walkinshaw, Trotman's Buildings, Legg Street Road, S.

As Nurse! For what enormous funds we can draw on the bank of Memory on the mention of that familiar word! With the nurse are connected our youthful hopes and fears—our earliest joys, our earliest sorrows. She was the autocrat of our nonage. Her empire over us commenced even before memory began. When Frederick the Great tempted the soldier on guard

to smoke a pipe, adding that he was the king, what was the reply of the faithful sentinel? "King," he said, "be hanged; what will my captain say?" So, when even the parental authority winked at our infantile shortcomings, the dread thought, "What will nurse say?" shot through our youthful minds; and the parental wink, although it might be urged in alleviation, could not purchase impunity.

Charles Lamb, in one of his delightful Essays, says, that if he were not an independent gentleman he would like to be a beggar. Alexander of Macedon expressed a somewhat analogical wish in reference to Diogenes in his tub. Thus, to come farther down and nearer home, I may say that next to being the Marchioness of Candyshire, I should like to be the Marchioness of Candyshire's nurse. I will not enlarge on the gorgeous estate of the monthly nurse in an aristocratic family, on her unquestioned despotism, her unresisted caprices, her irreversible decrees, her undisputed sway over Baby, her familiarity with the most eminent of the Faculty, and the auriferous oblations offered to her in the shape of guineas in the christening cup, because the lady of Trotman's Buildings is the nurse I propose to sketch, not a lunar but a permanent nurse, one of the arbiters of the child's career, from its emancipation from the cradle to its entrance into the school-room.

And surely, when we hear so much of what schoolmasters and mistresses have done towards forming children's minds; when old Fuller bids us remember "R. Bond, of Lancashire," for that he had the "breeding the learned Ascham," and "Hartgrave in Brundly school, because he was the first did teach worthy Dr. Whitaker," and "Mulgrave for his scholar, that gulf of learning, Bishop Andrews;" when we are told what influence this first schoolmistress had towards making Hannah More a moralist, or that poor dear governess L. E. L.* a poetess, should we not call to mind what mighty influences the nurse must have had in

* Miss Letitia Elizabeth Landon, authoress of "The Improvisatrice," "The Troubadour," "The Golden Violet," "The Vow of the Peacock," and other forgotten poems.

kneading the capacities and after-likings and after-learnings of the most famous men and women? What heroes and statesmen must have learnt their first lessons of fortitude and prudence on the nurse's knee—what hornbooks of duty and truth and love and piety must have been first conned under that homely instructress?

On the other hand, what grievous seeds of craven fear, and dastardly rebellion, and hypocrisy and hate, and stubborn pride must have been sown in the child's first nursery garden by the nurse? Shakspeare, who never overlooked anything, was mindful of the nurse's mission: you may turn up in his works a score of quotations on the nursery head without trouble; and (most ludicrous descent of analogy) even that American showman had some shrewd knowledge of the chords that are respondent in the human heart, when he foisted an old black woman on his countrymen as Washington's nurse.

Mrs. Pettifer, now desirous of an engagement in a family of distinction, must have been originally, I take it, a nursery-maid; but if ever lowliness were her "young ambition's ladder," she now decidedly

> "Looks in the clouds, scorning the base degrees
> By which she did ascend."

Between her and nursery-maids there is a yawning gulf as impassable as Niagara in a cock-boat. "Bits of girls," "trumpery things," thus she characterises them. She overflows with the failing by which angels are said to have fallen—pride. There is no humility, real or simulated, about her. She knows her place thoroughly; but she knows that place is to command, to reprimand, to overawe high and low, from the Marchioness of Candyshire to Prue the smallest maid, who is the slave of her gunpowder tea-pot and a bond-servant to her arrowroot skillet.

At the Marchioness of Candyshire's (where we will suppose her, for the nonce, to be installed), at that imposing town house in Great Gruffin Street, Brobdignag Square, about which Messrs. Gunter's myrmidons are always hanging with green boxes; where the clustered soot from bygone flambeaux in the iron extin-

guishers on the area railings is eloquent of entertainments past; and where the harlequinaded hatchment of Goliath the last Marquis (a sad man for chicken-hazard) hints what a great family the Candyshires are. Here, in this most noble mansion, from the nursery wicket to the weathercocks over the chimney cowls, Martha Pettifer is Empress and Queen. The lower suites of apartments she condescendingly concedes to the Marquis and Marchioness for balls, dinners, and similar trifles; but hers are the flight of nursery stairs, both back and front; hers the airy suite of upper rooms; hers the cribs, cradles, and tender bodies of the hopes and pride of Candyshire.

The youthful Earl of Everton, aged four, Lord Claude Toffie, aged three, Ladies Dulciana and Juliana Toffie, aged two years and eight months respectively, are her serfs, vassals, and villains. Over them she has all rights of soccage, jambage, free warren, turbary, pit and gallows (or rather corner and cupboard), and all other feudal and manorial rights. Lord Candyshire—a timid marquis with a red head, manifestly afraid of his own footman, and who was expected to do something great in the House on the Bosjesman Bishoprics (additional) Bill, but did not—is admitted to the nursery on sufferance, and gives there his caresses with perturbation, and his opinions with deference. Lady Candyshire—a superb member of the female aristocracy (you remember her portrait by Flummery, R.A., as Semiramis), and whom her cousin and former suitor, Lord Tommy Fetlock, frequently offers to back in the smoking-room of his club as "game" to "shut up" any number of ladies-in-waiting in a snail's canter—is subdued and complaisant in the nursery. She has an uneasy consciousness that she is not quite mistress there; and though Mrs. Pettifer is not at all like Semiramis, and no Flummery, R.A., ever dreamt of taking her portrait, the Marchioness defers to her, and bears with her humours and bends to her will.

As for the Candyshire carriage, sleek horses, tiger-skin hammer-cloth, coachman's wig, footman's bâtons, and herald painting, they are quite as much Mrs. Pettifer's as her ladyship's. If the youthful scions of that illustrious house are to take, according to her

sovereign will, an airing in the Park, and the Marchioness is desirous of attending a meeting of the ladies' committee of the Penitent Cannibals Society, she may take the brougham ; Martha Pettifer must have the great body vehicle. If, on the other hand, a visit is to be made to Mr. Manismooth, the dentist's, Martha boldly usurps the close carriage, and, bleak as may be the day, and lowering the clouds, leaves her mistress to shift for herself—even when Lord Candyshire (whose silent services at the House of Lords involve the carrying about of a huge mass of papers) has bespoken the curly-wigged coachman and the horses for the conveyance of himself and blue-books to Westminster. As to poor Mademoiselle Frileuse, the thin Swiss governess, with her charge, Lady Ariadne Toffie, aged eleven, she may take what vehicle she can procure.

Martha Pettifer, notwithstanding her high estate of carriage, and curly-wigged coachman and bâtoned footman, does not ape the apparel of an aristocrat. There is no mistaking her for a marchioness ; she is above that. She towers high among the youthful Candyshires, erect and stately, comfortably clad in woollen and stout silk. At shops and exhibitions, at the gate of that favourite resort of the juvenile aristocracy, the Zoological Gardens, in the Regent's Park, you may see the great Candyshire carriage standing; or you may watch it rolling leisurely through Hyde Park, the Candyshire children looking as beautiful and as delicate as only British children can look. Aristocratic mammas pass by in their carriages and remark, with languid complacency, how well the dear children look, and what a treasure Lady Candyshire must have in her nurse.

Which is best, think you, Mademoiselle Frileuse, to be—after a tedious intellectual training which may fit you to become a duchess, inasmuch as you are expected to impart it to a young lady who may be a duchess some day—a governess with forty pounds a year "salary," or to be Mrs. Pettifer, a nurse, with fifty pounds a year "wages"? Have you a tithe as much authority over your pupil as she has over her nurslings? Can you command the footmen, and make the nursemaids tremble? Does the

Marchioness defer to you, and say, "Mademoiselle, I dare say you know best, therefore do as you like." Can you contradict the doctor, the mighty Sir Paracelsus Powgrave, and make poor little Mr. Pildrag, the apothecary, shiver in his cloth boots when he comes to lance the children's gums? Are all your lingual skill, your drawing, your painting, your harp and pianoforte cunning, your geography, your use of the globes, and your rudiments of Latin, held as of half so much account as Mrs. Pettifer's experiences in the administration of a foot-bath, in the virtues of lambs'-wool socks, in the efficacy of a Dover's powder? You are to teach the children the learning which is to fortify their minds, the graces which are to adorn their persons for the tournament of the world; but yonder illiterate woman, who gives the children their physic, superintends their washing and dressing, and cuts their bread and butter, thinks and knows herself to be infinitely superior to you: "a bit of a governess, indeed!"

There are nurses in all grades and conditions of life who want places just now, but they all, on a correspondingly descending scale, are fashioned after the Pettifer model. Some are temporary and some permanent; some ready to take the child from the month, some preferring the care of children of more advanced growth. Then there is the transition nurse—half nurse, half nursemaid, and not adverse to subsiding into the anomalous position of a "young-ladies' maid." There are nurses of tender hearts, apt to conceive an affection for their charges quite as ardent as that which a mother ever had for her own children; who grieve as passionately when they are separated from them as those good Normandy women do who take the babes from the Foundling Hospital in Paris.

Such nurses will, after lapses of long years, and from immense distances, suddenly start up looking as young, or rather as old as ever, and shed tears of delight at the sight and speech of their nurse-children, grown men and women now, with children of their own to nurse. Woe is me that there should be found, among this apparently simple-minded and affectionate class, persons who make of their once state of nursehood a kind of prescriptive ground for

future claims. "Nurses!" says my friend Brown, with a groan, "I've had enough of 'em. My mother had thirteen children, and I have had seven of my own; and every now and then I am beset with importunate old women curtseying, hang 'em, and saying, 'Please, sir, I nursed you,' or, 'Please, sir, I was Master Tommy's nurse;' and who expect five shillings and a pound of green tea."

Then there is Mrs. Crapper, whom I may characterise as the "back-streets nurse," who is strictly temporary, and whose connection lies chiefly among small tradesmen and well-to-do mechanics. She dwells somewhere in Drury Court, or Carnaby Street, Golden Square, or Denmark Street, Soho, in a many-belled house, over a chandler's shop, or a bookstall, perhaps. The intuitive prescience of being wanted possessed by this woman is to me astonishing. She never requires to be "fetched" like the doctor—apparently so, at least. She seems to come up some domestic trap. There she is at her post, with a wonderful free-masonic understanding with the doctor, and the Registrar of Births, and the undertaker, and the sexton, and all the misty functionaries, whisperingly talked of but seldom seen, connected with our coming in and going out of the world. For Mrs. Crapper is as often an attendant upon the sunset as upon the sunrise of life.

There is also the Indian nurse, the Ayah, a brown female in crumpled white muslin, who comes over, with her nurse child, or *baba*, with Mrs. Captain Chutney, in the Puttyghaut East Indiaman, or with the widow of Mr. Mofuzzle, of the Civil Service, overland. Her performances in England are chiefly confined to sitting upon the stairs, shivering and chattering her teeth pitiably, and uttering heart-rending entreaties to be sent back to Bengal. Back to Bengal she is sent in due time, accordingly, to squat in a verandah, and talk to her *baba* in an unintelligible gabble of Hindostanee and English, after the manner of Ayahs generally.

There is a lady of the nurse persuasion who does not want a place in *The Times*, but who is not above wanting nurse children. The custom of putting children out to nurse is decidedly prevalent. The present writer was "raised" in this manner. I have no

coherent remembrance of the lady, but I bear yet about me an extensive scar caused by a humorous freak of hers to tear off a blister before the proper time. She also, I understand, was in the habit of beating me into a very prismatic condition, though, to do her justice, she distributed her blows among her nurse children and her own with unflinching impartiality. The termination of my connection with her was caused by her putting me into a bed with two of her young charges who were ill of the measles; following out a theory she entertained, that it was as well that I should catch that complaint then as in after days; on which occasion I was rescued from her and conveyed home, wrapped up in blankets. I have also an indistinct remembrance of having been, in some stage of my petticoathood, introduced to a young gentleman in a trencher cap and leather breeches, on the ground that he had been my foster-brother. Carrying memory farther back, and remembering sundry cuffs and kicks, and mutual out-tearings of handfuls of hair, I had some faint idea that I really had been acquainted with the young gentleman at some time or other.

The person who takes children in to nurse resides at Brentford, or at Lewisham, or Sydenham. Her husband may be a labourer in a market-garden, or a suburban omnibus driver, or a river bargeman. She may be (as she often is) a comely, kindly, motherly woman, delighting to make her little knot of infants a perfect nosegay of health, and beauty, and cleanliness; or she may be (as she very often is, too) an ignorant, brutish, drunken jade; beating, starving, and neglecting her helpless wards, laying in them the foundation of such mortal maladies, both physical and moral, as years of after nurture shall not assuage. And yet we take our nurses, or send our babies to nurse, blindfold, although we would not go out partridge shooting with a gun we had bought of Cheap Jack, or adventure our merchandise in a ship of which we knew not the name, the tonnage, or the register.

One more nurse closes my list—the hospital nurse. Mrs. Pettifer's high-blown pride may have, from over distension, at length broken, and the many summers she has floated "in a sea of glory," may, and do, find a termination sometimes in the cold,

dull, dark pool of an hospital ward. Yet power has not wholly passed away from her; for, beyond the doctors, to whom she must perforce be polite and submissive, and the students, whom she treats with waggish complacency, she is supreme over all with whom she comes in contact. Mrs. Pettifer, formerly feared and obeyed by the Candyshire vassalage, is here Nurse Canterbury or Nurse Adelaide, still feared, still obeyed in Canterbury or Adelaide Ward. Controller of physic, of sweet or bitter sauce for food; smoother of pillows, speaker of soft or querulous words, dispense of gall or balsam to the sick, she is conciliated by relatives, dreaded or loved by patients.

I often think, when I walk through the long, clean, silent wards of an hospital (nothing, save the lower decks of a man-of-war, can come up to hospital order, neatness, and cleanliness) watching the patients quietly resigned, yet so expressively suffering, the golden sunlight playing on their wan faces, the slow crawling steps of the convalescents, the intermittent cases sitting quietly at their beds' foot, waiting patiently till their time of torture shall come;—hearing the monotonous ticking of the clock, the slow rustling of the bed-clothes, the pattering foot of the nurse as she moves from bed to bed, consulting the paper at the bed-head as to the medicine and diet, and slowly gurgling forth the draught: I often think of what an immense, an awful weight of responsibility hangs in this melancholy abode upon the nurse. The doctor has his vocation, and performs it. He severs this diseased limb, and binds up that wound. The physician points out the path to health, and gives us drugs, like money, to help us on our way. But it is for the nurse to guide the weary wanderer; to wipe the dust from his bleared eyes and the cold sweat from his brow; to moisten his parched lips; to bathe his swollen feet: to soothe and tend and minister to him until the incubus of sickness be taken off, and he struggle into life a whole man again.

Sometimes the hospital nurse is not an aristocrat in decadence but a plebeian promoted. Often the back-streets nurse, at the recommendation of the doctor, changes the venue of her ministrations from Carnaby Street to Saint Gengulphus's or Saint Prude's

The hospital nurse is ordinarily hard-working, skilful, placable, and scrupulously cleanly; but she has, too frequently, two deadly sins. She drinks, and she is accessible to bribery; and, where bribery begins, extortion, partiality, and tyranny, to those who cannot bribe, soon follow. I wish I could acquit the hospital nurse of these weaknesses, but I cannot.* And this is why I hail as excellent and hopeful the recent introduction into some hospitals of superintendent nurses, called Sisters, superior in intelligence and education to the average class of attendants.

As nursery-maid; as nurse-girl; as wet-nurse ("with a good," &c., a lady generally sensitive as to diet, and whose daily pints of porter are with her points of honour); as schoolroom-maid: all these "want places" speak for themselves. They are buds and offshoots and twigs of the nurse-tree proper, and as such are highly useful, each in their distinctive sphere, but beyond that they do not call for any detailed notice here.

* This paper was first published in 1853; since that time many beneficial changes have been made in the system and practice of hospital nursing.

VII.

More Places Wanted.

AS LADY'S-MAID, a young person who has lived in the first families, and can have four years' good character. Fully understands dress-making, hair-dressing, and getting up fine linen. Address Miss T., Bunty's Library, Crest Terrace, Pimlico.

Miss Fanny Tarlatan, the young lady in quest of a situation, does not reside at Bunty's library. Mr. Bunty and Mr. Bunty's wife are only friends of hers. Mr. Bunty is tall and stout, with a white neckcloth, and is very like a clergyman, with a dash of the schoolmaster and a smack of the butler. Mrs. Bunty is an acrid lady in ribbons, with a perpetual smile for lady customers; which would be a little more agreeable if it did not twist her neck, and screw her mouth up, and twist her body over the counter. At Bunty's library are three-volume novels bound in dashing cloth; and Bunty's library is carpeted; and in the centre thereof is a great round table groaning beneath the weight of ladies' albums, and works of genteel piety, and treatises written with a view to induce a state of contentment among the rural population (hot-pressed and with gilt edges), together with neatly stitched pamphlets upon genteelly religious and political subjects, and handsomely clasped church services, with great red crosses on their backs and sides.

No; Miss Tarlatan does not live at Bunty's; but she is an old colleague of Mrs. Bunty's (once Miss Thorneytwig, my Lady Crocus's waiting woman), and calls her Matilda, and is by her called "Fanny," and "dear girl;" and therefore she gives Bunty's library as an address; it being considered more aristocratic than Tidlers' Gardens; where, in the house of Mrs. Silkey,

that respectable milliner and dressmaker, Miss Tarlatan is at present staying.

She can dress hair, make dresses, and perfectly understands getting up fine linen. The French *coiffeur* is still a great personage; but his services are now-a-days often supplied by the lady's-maid; and there are many fair and noble ladies who are not too haughty to employ Miss Tarlatan, and go, resplendent from her skill, into the presence of their sovereign, or into the melodious vicinity of the singers of the Italian opera. Also to wear ball and court dresses made, not by the pallid workwomen and "first hands" of the great millinery establishments of the West-End, but by the nimble fingers of Fanny Tarlatan. Also to confide to her sundry priceless treasures of Mechlin and Brussels, Honiton and old point, or "beggar's lace," sprigged shawls and veils, and such marvels of fine things, to be by her got up. All of which proceedings are characterised by the great millinery establishments, by the fashionable *blanchisseuse de fin*, and by M. Anatole, *coiffeur*, of Regent Street, as atrocious, mean, stingy, avaricious, and unjustifiable on the part of *miladi;* but which, if they suit her to order and Miss Tarlatan to undertake, are in my mind, on the broad gauge of free trade, perfectly reasonable and justifiable.

Some ladies make a merit of their Tarlatanism, stating, with pride, that their maids "do everything for them"; others endeavour uneasily to defend their economy by reference to the hardness of the times, to their large families, to the failure of revenue from my lord's Irish estates, to the extravagance of such and such a son or heir, or to Sir John having lost enormously in railways or by electioneering. One lady I have heard of who palliated all domestic retrenchments on the ground of having to pay so much income-tax. Unhappy woman!

Hairdresser, dressmaker, getter-up of fine linen; skilled in cosmetics and perfumes; tasteful arranger of bouquets; dexterous cleaner of gloves (for my lady must have two pairs of clean gloves a-day, and, bountiful as may be her pin-money, you will rarely find her spending seven-hundred and thirty times four shillings per

annum in gloves); artful trimmer of bonnets; clever linguist; of great conversational powers in her own language; of untiring industry, cheerfulness, and good temper—all these is Fanny Tarlatan, aged twenty-eight. I have a great respect for Fanny Tarlatan, and for the lady's-maid generally, and wish to vindicate her from the slur of being a gossiping, tawdry, intriguing, venal waiting-maid, as which she is generally represented in novels and plays, and similar performances.

Fanny is not without personal charms; she has ringlets that her lady might envy, and the comely good-humoured look which eight-and-twenty is often gilded with. She has been resolute enough to steel her heart against the advances of many a dashing courier, of many an accomplished valet, of many a staid and portly butler. She does not look for matrimony in the World of Service. Mr. Whatnext, at the Great Haberdashery Palace, Froppery House, head man there, indeed (though Mr. Biggs, my lord's gentleman, has sneeringly alluded to him as a "low counter-jumper"), has spoken her fair. Jellytin, the rising pastrycook at Gunter's, has openly avowed his maddening passion, and showed her his savings'-bank book. But that did not dazzle her; for she too has a "little bit of money of her own." Her revenues chiefly lie, not in her wages—they are not too ample—but in her perquisites. Lawyers would starve (figuratively, of course, for 'tis impossible for a lawyer to starve under any circumstances) on the bare six-and-eightpences—it is the extra costs that fatten. Perquisites are Fanny Tarlatan's costs. To her fall all my lady's cast-off clothes. Their amount and value depend upon my lady's constitutional liberality or parsimony. A dress may be worn once, a week, a month, or a year before it reverts to the lady's-maid. So with gloves, shoes, ribbons, and all the other weapons in the female armoury, of which I know no more than St. Anthony did of the sex—or that Levantine monk, Mr. Curzon, made us acquainted with, who had never *seen* a woman.*

* See "Visits to the Monasteries of the Levant." By the Hon. Robert Curzon. London, 1849.

Old Lady McAthelyre, with whom Fanny lived before she went to the Countess of Cœurdesart's (Lady McA. was a terrible old lady, not unsuspected of a penchant for shoplifting and drinking *eau de Cologne* grog), used to cut up all her old dresses for aprons, and the fingers off her gloves for mittens, and was the sort of old lady altogether who might reasonably be expected to skin a flea for the hide and tallow thereof. Mrs. Colonel Scraw, Fanny's mistress after Lady Cœurdesart, made her old clothes her own peculiar perquisites, and sold them herself. But such exceptions are rare, and Fanny has had, on the whole, no great reason to complain. Perhaps you will, therefore, at some future time, meet with her under the name of Whatnext, or Jellytin, or Figgles, or Seakale, in a snug, well-to-do West-End business, grown into a portly matron (with ringlets yet; for they are vital to the lady's-maid through life), with two little girls tripping home from Miss Weazel's dancing academy. I hope so, with all my heart.

There is a custom common among the English nobility, and yet peculiar to that privileged class, to get the best of everything. Consequently, whenever they find foreign cooks and foreign musicians more skilful than native talent, it is matter of noble usance to refect upon foreign dishes; to prefer the performances of foreign minstrels and players; to cover the head, or hands, or feet, with coverings made by foreign artisans; and, even in the ordinary conversation of life, to pepper discourse with foreign words, as you would a sheep's kidney with cayenne. So my lord duke entertains in his great mansion a French cook, a Swiss confectioner, an Italian house-steward, a French valet, German and French governesses, a German under-nurse or *bonne* (that his children may imbibe fragments of foreign language with their pap), besides a host of non-resident foreign artists and professors gathered from almost every nation under the sun. It is, therefore, but reasonable that her grace the duchess should have a foreign attendant—a French, or Swiss, or German lady's-maid. I will take Mademoiselle Batiste, warranted from Paris, as a sample.

When I say warranted from Paris, I mean what the word

"warranted" is generally found to mean—not at all like what it professes to be. Mademoiselle Batiste says she is from Paris; but she does not bear the slightest resemblance to the pert, sprightly, coquettish, tasteful, merry creature in a cunning cap, a dress closed to the neck, a plaited silk apron and shiny shoes, that a Parisian lady's-maid generally is. My private impression is that she is a native of some distressingly lugubrious provincial town in the *midi* of France—Aigues-Mortes, perchance—whence she has been sent, for our sins, to England, to make us mournful. She is a most dolorous Abigail; a lachrymose, grumbling, doleant, miserable waiting-woman. When she is old (she is in the thirties, now) she will take snuff and keep a poodle on some fifth floor in the Marais. Whether she has been disappointed in love, or her relations were guillotined during the great revolution; whether she was born on the eve of St. Swithin, or like Apollodorus, nourishes scorpions in her breast, I know not, but she is a very grievous woman—a female knight of the rueful countenance. If you fail to please her, she grumbles; if you remonstrate with her, she cries. What are you to do with a woman whose clouds always end in rain, unless you have Patience for an umbrella?

In person, Mademoiselle Batiste is tall; in compass, wofully lean and attenuated; her face is of the hatchet cast, and she has protruding teeth, long dark eyebrows, stony eyes, and heavy eyelashes. A sick monkey is not a very enlivening sight; a black man with chilblains and a fit of the ague is not calculated to provoke cheerfulness, and there are spectacles more cheerful than a workhouse funeral on a wet day; but all these are positively carnivals of joviality compared to Mademoiselle Batiste wailing over her lady's wardrobe, her own wrongs, and her unhappy destiny generally. The climate, the food, the lodging, the raiment, the tyranny of superiors, and the insolence of inferiors; all these find a place in the category of this gruesome lady's unhappiness. She prophesies the decadence of England with far more fervour than M. Ledru Rollin. She will impress herself to leave this detestable land; without sun, without manners, without knowledge of living.

Somehow she does not quit this detestable land. She is like (without disrespect) that animal of delusive promise, the conjuror's donkey, which is always going for to go, but seldom does really go, up the ladder. Mademoiselle Batiste weeps and moans, and grumbles, and changes her situation innumerable times, and packs up her "effects" for the Continent once a week or so; but stays in England after all. When she has saved enough money, she may perhaps revisit the land of the Gaul, and relate to her compatriots the affliction sore which long time she bore among *ces barbares*.

In reality, Mademoiselle Batiste is an excellent servant; she is not only apt but erudite in all the cunning of her craft. M. Anatole, of Regent Street, might take lessons in hair-dressing from her. She far surpasses Miss Tarlatan in dress-making; although she disdains to include that accomplishment in the curriculum of her duties. But her principal skill lies in *putting on a dress*, in imparting to her mistress when dressed an air, a grace, a *tournure*, which any but a French hand must ever despair of accomplishing. Yet she grumbles meanwhile; and when she has made a peri of a peeress, sighs dolefully, and maintains that an Englishwoman does not know how to wear a robe. This skill it is that makes her fretfulness and melancholial distemper borne with by rank and fashion. She has, besides, a pedigree of former engagements of such magnitude and grandeur, that rank and fashion are fain to bow to her caprices. The beauteous Duchesse de Faribole in Paris, and the Marquise de Lysbrisée (very poor, very Legitimist, but intensely fashionable); the famous Princess Cabbagioso at Florence, Countess Moskamujikoff at St. Petersburgh, the Duchess of Champignon, the Marchioness of Truffleton and Lady Frances Frongus in England—all these high-born ladies has she delighted with her skill, awed with her aristocratic antecedents, and annoyed with her melancholia.

Although so highly skilled in dress-making she pays but little regard to costume herself. Her figure is straight all the way down, on all sides. She wears a long pendant shawl, a dreary bonnet with trailing ribbons; and carries, when abroad, a long,

melancholy, attenuated umbrella, like a parasol that had outgrown itself and was wasting away in despair. These, with the long dull gold drops to her ear-rings; two flat thin smooth bands of hair flattened upon her forehead; long listless fingers, and long feet encased in French boots of lustreless kid, give her an unspeakably mournful, trailing appearance. She seems to have fallen altogether into the "portion of weeds and outgrown faces." Her voice is melancholy and tristfully surgant, like an Æolian harp; her delivery is reminiscent of the Dead March in Saul;—a few wailing, lingering notes, closed with a melancholy boom at the end of the strophe. Adieu, Mademoiselle Batiste.

There are many more lady's-maids who want places; and, taking into consideration the increased facilities offered by the abolition of the duty on advertisements, I sincerely hope they may all be suited satisfactorily. But I cannot tarry to discuss all their several qualifications, although I can conscientiously recommend "Wilkins" (Christian name unknown), the lady's-maid of middle age, and domesticated habits, who was with Mrs. Colonel Stodger during the whole of the Sutlej campaign; who is not too proud to teach the cook how to make curries; is reported to have ridden (with her mistress) on man's saddle 500 miles on camel's back in India, and to have done something considerable towards shooting a plundering native discovered in Mrs. Colonel Stodger's tent.

Nor would I have you overlook the claims of Martha Stirpenny, who is a "young lady's-maid," and is not above plain needlework; or, of Miss Catchpole, the maid, nurse, companion, amanuensis, everything, for so many years to the late Miss Plough, of Maunday Terrace, Bayswater, who ungratefully left all her vast wealth in Bank and India stock to the "Total Abstinence from Suttee Hindoo Widows' Society," offices, Great St. Helen's, secretary, G. F. L. B. Stoneybatter, Esq.; and bequeathed to her faithful Catchpole, after twenty years' service, only a silver teapot and a neatly-bound set of the Rev. Doctor Duffaboxe's sermons. All these domestics want places, and all letters to them must be post-paid.

AS COOK (Professed) a Person who fully understands her business. Address L., Pattypan Place, Great Brazier Street.

There is something honest, outspoken, fearless, in this brief advertisement. L. does not condescend to hint about the length and quality of her character, or the distinguished nature of the family she wishes to enter. "Here I am," she seems to say; "a professed cook. If you are the sort of person knowing what a professed cook is, and how to use her, try me. Good cooks are not so plentiful that they need shout for custom. Good wine needs no bush. I stand upon my cooking, and if you suit me as I suit you, nothing but a spoilt dinner shall part us two." L., whom we will incarnate for the nonce as Mrs. Lambswool, widow, is fat and forty, but not fair. The fires of innumerable kitchen ranges have swarthed her ruddy countenance to an almost salamandrine hue. And she is a salamander in temper too, is Mrs. Lambswool, for all her innocent name. Lambswool, deceased (formerly clerk of the kitchen to the Dawdle Club), knew it to his cost, poor man; and for many a kept back dinner and unpraised made dish did he suffer in his time.

If Fate could bring together (and how seldom Fate *does* bring together things and persons suited for one another), Mrs. Lambswool and Sir Chyle Turrener, how excellently they would agree! Sir Chyle—who dwells in Bangmarry Crescent, Hordover Square, and whose house as you pass it smells all day like a cook-shop—made his handsome competence in the war time by contracts for mess-beef as execrable, and mess-biscuits as weevily, as ever her Majesty's service, by sea or land, spoilt their digestion and their teeth with. He is, in these piping times of peace, renowned as the most accomplished epicure in the dining world. He does not dine often at his club, the Gigot (although that establishment boasts of great gastronomic fame, and entertains a head man cook at a salary of two hundred and fifty pounds a year); he accused M. Relevay, the *chef* in question, of paying more attention to the greasing and adornment of his hair, and the composition of his bills of fare in ornamental penmanship, than to the culinary wants of the members; he will not have a man cook

himself; "the fellows," he says, "are as conceited as peacocks and as extravagant as Cleopatra." Give him a woman cook—a professed cook, who knows her business, and does it; and the best of wages and the best of places are hers at 35, Bangmarry Crescent.

Let us figure him and Mrs. Lambswool together. Sir Chyle—a little apple-faced old gentleman with a white head, and as fiery in temper as his cook—looks on Mrs. Lambswool as, next to the dinners she cooks and the government annuity in which (with a sagacious view towards checking the prodigality of his nephew and expectant heir) he has sunk his savings, the most important element in his existence. He places her in importance and consideration far beyond the elderly female attached to his household in the capacity of wife—used by him chiefly in forming a hand at whist and in helping soup (catch Sir Chyle trusting her with fish!) and by him abused at every convenient opportunity. He absolutely forbids any interference on her part with the culinary economy and discipline. "Blow up the maids as much as you like, ma'am," he considerately says, "but don't meddle with my cook." Mrs. L. crows over her mistress accordingly, and if she were to tell her that pea-soup was best made with bilberries, the poor lady would, I daresay, take the dictum for granted.

Sir Chyle Turrener is exceedingly liberal in all matters of his own housekeeping—although he once wrote a letter to *The Times* virulently denouncing soup kitchens. When a dinner of a superlative nature has issued from his kitchen, he not unfrequently, in the warmth of his admiration, presents Mrs. Lambswool with gratuities in money; candidly admitting that he gives them now, because he does not intend to leave his cook a penny when he dies, seeing that she can dress no more dinners for him after his decease. On grand occasions she is summoned to the dining-room, at the conclusion of the repast, and he compliments her formally on this or that culinary triumph. He lauds her to his friends Tom Aitchbone, of the Beefsteak Club, Common Councilman Podge, Sergeant Buffalo, of the Southdown circuit, and old Sir Thomas Marrowfat, who was a prothonotary to something,

somewhere, sometime—no matter when or where—and can nose a dinner in the lobby (the poor old fellow can hardly hold his knife and fork for the palsy, and his napkin tucked under his wagging old chin looks like a grave-cloth) with as much felicity as Hamlet stated that the remains of King Claudius's chamberlain might have been discovered.

It is a strong point in the Turrener and Lambswool creed and practice to hold all cookery-books—for any practical purposes beyond casual reference—in great indifference, not to say contempt. Sir Chyle has Glasse and Kitchener, Austin and Ude, Francatelli and Soyer, besides the "Almanach des Gourmands" and the "Cuisinier Royal" in his library, gorgeously bound. He glances at them occasionally just as Bentley, the critic, might have glanced at a dictionary or a lexicon; but he does not tie himself nor does he bind his cook to blind adherence to their rules. True cookery, in his opinion, should rest mainly on tradition, on experience, and pre-eminently in the inborn genius of a cook.

Mrs. Lambswool holds the same opinion, although she may express it in different language. She may never have heard of the axiom, "One becomes a cook, but one is born a roaster;" but she will tell you in her own homely language that "roasting and biling comes nateral, and some is good at it, and some isn't." Her master has told her the story of Vatel and his fish martyrdom, but she holds his suicide to have been rank cowardice. "If there wasn't no fish," she remarks, "and it wasn't his fault, why couldn't he have served up something neat in the made-dish way, with a bit of a speech about being drove up into a corner?" But she hints darkly as to what she would have done to the fishmonger. Transfixure on a spit would have been too good for *him*, a wretch.

Through long years of choice feeding might this pair roll on, till the great epicure, Death, pounces on Sir Chyle Turrener to garnish *his* sideboard. If dainty pasture can improve meat, he will be a succulent morsel. He has fed on many things animate and inanimate: Nature will return the compliment

then. For all here below is vanity, and even good dinners and professed cooks cannot last for ever. The fishes have had their share of Lucullus, and Apicius has helped to grow mustard and cress these thousand years. So *might* the knight and the cook roll on, I say; but a hundred to one if they ever come in contact. The world is very wide; and, although the heiress with twenty thousand pounds, who has fallen in love with us, lives over the way, we marry the housemaid, and our heads grow gray, and we die, and we never reck of the heiress. Sir Chyle Turrener may, at this moment, be groaning in exasperation at an unskilful cook, who puts too much pepper in his soup and boils his fish to flakes; and Mrs. Lambswool's next place may be with a north country squire with no more palate than a boa-constrictor, who delights in nothing half so much as a half-raw beefsteak, or a pie with a crust as thick as the walls of the model prison, and calls made-dishes "kickshaws."

"As Good Cook in a private family," &c., &c., &c.,—the usual formula, with a hint as to irreproachable character, and a published want of objection to the country. The Good Cook does not pretend to the higher mysteries or the "professed." I doubt if she knows what a *bain marie* pan is, or what *mayonnaises, salmis, sautés, fricandeaux, gratins,* or *soufflés* are. Her French is not even of the school of "Stratford-atte-Bow," and she does not understand what a *met* can mean. Her stock made-dishes are veal cutlets, haricot mutton, stewed eels, and Irish stew. She makes all these well; and very good things they are in their way. She is capital at a hand of pork and pea-soup; at pigeon pies; at roasting, boiling, frying, stewing, and baking. She is great at pies and puddings, and has a non-transcribed receipt for plum-pudding, which she would not part with for a year's wages. She can cook as succulent, wholesome, cleanly a dinner as any Christian man need wish to sit down to; but she is not an artist. Her dinners are not in the "first style." She may do for Bloomsbury, but not for Belgravia.

HOUSEMAID (where a footman is kept), a respectable young woman, with three years' good character. Address L. B., Gamms Court, Lamb's Conduit Street.

Letitia Brownjohn, who wishes to be a housemaid, who has three years' good character (by her pronounced "krakter"), is two-and-twenty years of age. Her father is a smith, or a pianoforte maker, or a leather-dresser, stifling with a large family in Gamms Court. Her mother has been out at service in her time, and Letitia is in the transition state now—in the chrysalis formation of domestic drudgery; which she hopes to exchange some day for the full-blown butterflyhood of a home, a husband, a family, and domestic drudgery of her own. Ah, Letitia, for all that you are worried now by captious mistresses, the time may come when, in some stifling Gamms Court of your own, steaming over a washtub, with a drunken husband and a brood of ragged children, you may sigh for your quiet kitchen, the cat, the ticking clock, the workbox in the area window, and your cousin (in the Guards) softly whispering and whistling outside the area railings.

Letitia Brownjohn, like most other young ladies of the housemaid calling, has had an university education. Not, I need scarcely tell, at theological Oxford, or logarithmical Cambridge; nor at the Silent Sisters', who would not suit Letitia by any means; nor at Durham, famous for its mustard and its mines; nor at any one of those naughty colleges in Ireland which the Pope is so angry with;* nor even at any one of the colleges recently instituted in this country "for ladies only," as the railway carriages have it—yet in an university. Letitia, as most of the university-educated do, went in the first instance to a public school; that founded by Lady Honoria Woggs (wife of King William the Third's Archbishop Woggs), where intellectual training was an object of less solicitude by the committee of management than the attainment of a strong nasal style of vocal elocution, as applied to the sacred lyrics of Messrs. Sternhold and Hopkins, and the wearing a peculiarly hideous costume

* The Queen's Colleges, known among the Roman Catholics as the "Godless Colleges." They were abolished in 1882.

accurately copied and followed from the painted wooden statuette of one of Lady Woggs' girls, in Lady Woggs' own time, placed in a niche over the porch of the dingy brick building containing Lady Woggs' school, and flanked in another niche by another statuette of a young gentleman in a muffin cap and leathers, representing one of Lady Woggs' boys.

From this establishment our Letitia passed, being some nine or ten years of age, to the university; and there she matriculated, and there she graduated. Do you know that university to which three-fourths—nay, nineteen-twentieths—of our London-bred children "go up?" Its halls and colleges are the pavement and the gutter; its lecture-theatre the doorstep and the post at the corner; its schools of philosophy are the chandler's shop, the cobbler's stall, and the public-house, of which the landlord is the chancellor; its proctor and bull-dogs are the police-sergeant and his men; its public orators, the ballad-singers and last-dying-speech criers; its lecturers are scolding women. The weekly wages of its occupants form its university chest. Commemoration takes place every Saturday night, with grand musical performances from the harp, guitar, and violin, opposite the "Admiral Keppel." The graduates are mechanics and small tradesmen and their wives. The undergraduates are Letitias and Tommies. The University is the Street.

Right in its centre stands the Tree of Knowledge of good and evil. And all day long children come and pluck the fruit and eat it; and some choose ripe and wholesome fruit, the pleasant savour of which shall not depart out of their mouths readily; but some elect bad and rotten apples, which they fall upon and devour gluttonously, so that the fruit disagrees with them very much indeed, and causes them to break all out in such eruptions of vicious humours, as their very children's children's blood shall be empoisoned with, years hence. And some, being young and foolish and ignorant, take and eat indiscriminately of the good and of the bad fruit, and are sick and sorry or healthful and glad alternately; but might fare badly and be lost in the long run did not Wisdom and Love (come from making of rainbows and

quelling of storms, perhaps a million miles away, to consider of the sparrows and take stock of the flies in the back street university) appear betimes among these young undergraduates gathered under the branches, and teach their hearts how to direct their hands to pluck good sustenance from that tree.

I never go down a back street and look on the multitude of children (I don't mean ragged Bedouin children, but decently attired young people, of poor but honest parents, living hard by, who have no better playing-ground for them), and hear them singing their street songs, and see them playing street games, and making street friendships, and caballing on doorsteps, or conspiring by posts, or newsmongering on kerbstones, or trotting along with jugs and halfpence for the beer, or listening open-mouthed to the street orators and musicians, or watching Punch and the acrobats, or forming a ring at a street fight, or gathered round a drunken man, or running to a fire, or running from a bull, or pressing round about an accident, bonnetless and capless, but evidently native to this place—without these thoughts of the university and the tree coming into my head.

You who may have been expensively educated and cared for, and have had a gymnasium for exercise, covered playing courts, class-rooms, cricket-fields, ushers to attend you in the hours of recreations; who have gone from school and college into the world, well recommended and with a golden passport, should think more, and considerately too, of what a hazardous, critical, dangerous nature this street culture is. With what small book-learning these poor young undergraduates get, or that their parents can afford to provide them with, is mixed simultaneously the strangest course of tuition in the ethics of the pawnbroker's shop, the philosophy of the public-house, the rhetoric of drunken men and shrewish women, the logic of bad associations, and bad examples, and bad language.

Our Letitia graduated in due course of girlhood, becoming a mistress of such household arts as a London-bred girl can hope to acquire at the age of fourteen or fifteen. Well, you know what sort of a creature the lodging-house maid-of-all-work is,

and what sort of a life she leads. You have seen her; her pattens and dishevelled cap, her black stockings and battered tin candlestick. We have all known Letitia Brownjohns—oft-times comely, neat-handed Phillises enough—oft-times desperately slatternly and untidy—in almost every case wofully overworked and as wofully underpaid.

Letitia must be up early and late. With the exception of the short intermission of sleep doled forth to her, her work is ceaseless. She ascends and descends every step of every flight of stairs in the house hundreds of times in the course of the day; she is the slave of the ringing both of the door-bell and the lodgers. She must be little more than an animated appendage to the knocker—a jack-in-the-box, to be produced by a double rap. She is cook, housemaid, lady's-maid, scullery-maid, housekeeper, all in one; and for what? For some hundred and fifty shillings every year, and some—few and far between—coppers and sixpences, doled out to her in gratuities by the lodgers in consideration of her Briarean handiwork. Her holidays are very, very few. Almost her only intercourse with the outer world takes place when she runs to the public-house at the corner for the dinner or supper beer, or to a neighbouring fishmonger for oysters.

A rigid supervision is kept over her conduct. She is expected to have neither friends, acquaintances, relations, nor sweethearts. "No followers" is the Median and Persian law continually paraded before her; a law unchangeable, and broken only under the most ruinous penalties. When you and I grumble at our lot, repine at some petty reverse, fret and fume over the curtailment of some indulgence, the deprivation of some luxury, we little know what infinite gradations of privation and suffering exist; and what admirable and exemplary contentment and cheerfulness are often to be found among those whose standing is on the lowest rounds of the ladder.

But Letitia is emancipated from the maid-of-all-work thraldom now, and aspires to be a "Housemaid where a footman is kept;" yet not without considerable difficulty, and after years of arduous apprenticeship and servitude. With the maid-of-all-work, as

she begins, so 'tis ten to one that as such she ends. I have known gray-headed maids-of-all-work; and from these—with a sprinkling of insolvent laundresses and widows who have had their mangles seized for rent—is recruited, and indeed organised, the numerous and influential class of "charwomen" who do household work for eighteenpence a day and a glass of spirits.

But Letitia Brownjohn has been more fortunate. Some lady lodger, perchance, in some house in which she has been a servitor, has taken a fancy to her; and such lodger, taking in due course of human eventuality a house for herself, has taken Letitia to be her own private housemaid. And she has lived with City families, and tradesmen's families, and in boarding-schools; and she has grown from the untidy "gal" in the black stockings and the mob cap, to be a natty young person in a smart cap and ribands, aspiring to a situation where a footman is kept. That she may speedily obtain such an appointment, that the footman may be worthy of his companion in service, that they may please each other (in due course of time) even to the extent of the asking of banns and the solemnisation of a certain service, I very cheerfully and sincerely wish.

VIII.

Old Ladies.

ARE there any old ladies left, now-a-days? The question may at first appear absurd; for by the returns of the last census we find that seven per cent. of the whole female population were, four years since, widows;* and that, at the same period, there were in Great Britain three hundred and fifty-nine thousand nine hundred and sixty-nine "old maids" above the age of forty. Yet I repeat my question, and am prepared to abide by the consequences: Are there any old ladies left, now-a-days?

Statistically, of course, substantially even, old ladies are as plentiful as of yore; but I seek in vain for the old lady types of my youth; the feminine antiquities that furnished forth my juvenile British Museum. Every omnibus-conductor has his old lady passenger—pattens, big basket, umbrella. The cabman knows the old lady well—her accurate measurement of mileage, her multitudinous packages, for which she resists extra payment; her objections to the uncleanliness of the straw and the dampness of the cushion; her incessant use of the checkstring and frequent employment of a parasol handle, or a key, dug into the small of the driver's back as a means of attracting his attention; her elaborate but contradictory directions as to where she wishes to be set down; and, finally, her awful threats of fine, imprisonment, and treadmill should that much-ill-used Ixion-at-sixpence-a-mile offend her.

No railway train starts without an old lady, who screams whenever the whistle is sounded; groans in the tunnels; is sure there

* Written A.D. 1855.

is something the matter with the engine; smuggles surreptitious poodles into the carriage; calls for tea at stations where there are no refreshment-rooms; summons the guard to the door at odd times during the journey, and tells him he ought to be ashamed of himself, because the train is seven minutes behind time; insists upon having the window up or down at precisely the wrong periods; scrunches the boots of her opposite neighbour, or makes short lunges into his waistcoat during intempestive naps, and, should he remonstrate, indulges in muttered soliloquies, ending with, "One doesn't know who one is travelling with, now-a-days;" and carries a basket of provisions, from which crumbs disseminate themselves unpleasantly on all surrounding laps and knees, and from which the neck of a small black bottle *will* peep: the cork being always mislaid in the carriage, and causing unspeakable agonies to the other passengers in the efforts for its recovery.

There are old ladies at every theatre, who scream hysterically when guns are discharged; who, when the Blaze of Bliss in the Realms of Dioramic Delight takes place, seem on the point of crying "Fire!" and who persist in sitting before you in huge bonnets, apparently designed expressly to shut out the dangerous seductions of the ballet. Churches teem with old ladies—from the old ladies in the pews who knock down the prayer-books during the "I publish the banns," and turn over the mouldy hassocks, blinding you with a cloud of dust and straw-chips, to the old ladies, mouldier and dustier than the hassocks, who open the pews, cough for sixpences, and curtsey for shillings, and the very old ladies who sit in the free seats, have fits during the sermon, and paralysis all through the service. There are old ladies in ships upon the high seas who *will* speak to the man at the wheel; in bad weather, moaningly request to be thrown overboard, and block up the companion-ladder—mere senseless bundles of sea-sick old-ladyism. There is never a crowd without an old lady in it. The old lady is at almost every butcher's shop, at almost every grocer's retail establishment, on Saturday nights.

Every housemaid knows an old lady who objected to ribands,

counted the hearthstones, denounced the "fellows" (comprising the police, the household troops, and the assistants of the butcher and grocer aforesaid), and denied that the cat broke all the crockery at her (the housemaid's) last place. Every cook has been worritted dreadfully by the old lady; every country parson knows her and dreads her, for she interferes with the discipline of the village school, and questions the orthodoxy of his sermons. Every country doctor is aware of, and is wroth with her; for there is either always something the matter with her, or else she persists in dosing, pilling, and plastering other old ladies who have something the matter with them, to the stultification of the doctor's prescriptions and the confusion of science.

The missionaries would have little to eat and nobody to eat them up in the South Seas, were it not for the old ladies. Exeter Hall in May would be a howling wilderness but for the old ladies in the front seats, their umbrellas, and white pocket-handkerchiefs. And what Professor Methusaleh and his pills, Professor Swallow with his ointment, Doctor Bumblepuppy with his pitch-plasters, and Mr. Spools, M.R.C.S., with his galvano-therapeutic blisters, would do without old ladies I'm sure I don't know. Yea, and the poor-boxes of the police-courts for their Christmas five-pound notes, the destitute for their coals and blankets, the bed-ridden old women for their flannel petticoats, would often be in sorry plight but for the aid of the old ladies, bless them!

At every birth and at every death there is an old lady. I have heard that old ladies are sometimes seen at courts. It is whispered that old ladies have from time to time been found in camps. Nay, irreverent youth, hot-headed, inconsiderate youngsters, doubtless—bits of boys—have sometimes the assurance to hint that old ladies have, within these last thousand years, been known to sit in the councils of royalty, and direct the movement of armies, the intricacies of diplomacy, and the operations of commerce.

But these are not *my* old ladies. Search the wide world through, and bring before me legions of old ladies, and I shall still be asking my old question.

No. I will be positive, and give my self-asked question a negative, once for all. There are *no* old ladies now-a-days. You know as well as I do that there are no children now; no tender rump-steaks; no good fellows; no good books; no chest-tenors; no clever actors; no good tragedies, and no old port wine. The old ladies have followed all these vanished good things. If they exist at all, they exist only to that young generation which is treading on our corns and pushing us from our stools, which laughs in its sleeve at us, and calls us old fogies behind our backs; to that generation which yet believes in the whisperings of fancy, the phantoms of hope, and the performance, by age, of the promises of youth.

The old women have even disappeared. Women there are, and old, but no old women. The old woman of Berkeley; the old woman of Tutbury, who so marvellously supported herself by suction from her pocket-handkerchief; the aërostatic old woman who effected an ascent so many times higher than the moon; the old woman who lived in a shoe, and frugally nurtured her numerous offspring upon broth without bread; the delightful old woman, and member of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals—Mother Hubbard—who so tenderly entertained that famous dog, though, poor soul, she was often put to it to find him a bone in her cupboard; the eccentric old woman who—is it possible to imagine it?—lived upon nothing but victuals and drink, and yet would never be quiet (she vanished from my youthful ken at about the same time as the old man of Tobago—who lived on rice, sugar, and sago); the terrible old French woman, La Mère Croquemitaine, who went about France with a birch and a basket, wherewith to whip and carry away naughty little girls and boys, and who has now been driven away herself by the principals of genteel seminaries in the Champs Elysées; the marvellous, fearsome old women of witchcraft, with brooms, hell-broths, spells and incantations; the good and wicked old women of the "Arabian Nights" and the "Child's Own Book"; fairy godmothers; hump-backed old women sitting by well-sides; cross old women gifted with magic powers, who were inad-

vertently left out of christening invitations, and wove dreadful spells in consequence; good women in the wood; old women who had grandchildren wearing little red-riding-hoods and meeting (to their sorrow) wolves; Mother Goose, Mother Redcap, even Mother Damnable (I beg your pardon)—all this goodly band of old women have been swept away.

There are no types of feminine age left to me now. All the picturesque types of life, besides, seem to be melting away. It is all coming to a dead level: a single line of rails, with signals, stations, points, and turntables; and the Cradle Train starts at "one fifteen," and the Coffin Train is due at "twelve forty-five." —An iron world.

Somewhere in the dusty room, of which the door has been locked for years, I have a cupboard. There, among the old letters —how yellow and faded the many scored expressions of affection have grown!—the locks of hair; the bygone washing-bills—"one pare sox, one frunt;" the handsome bill of costs (folio foolscap, stitched with green ferret) that came up as a rider to that small legacy that was spent so quickly; the miniature of the lady in the leg-of-mutton sleeves; the portraits of Self and Schoolfriend—Self in a frilled collar, grinning; Schoolfriend in a lay-down collar, also grinning; the rusted pens; the squeezed-out tubes of colour; the memoranda to be sure to do goodness knows what for goodness knows whom; the books begun; the cheque-books ended; the torn envelopes; the wedding cards with true lovers' knots dimmed and tarnished; the addresses of people who are dead; the keys of watches that are sold; the old passports, old hotel bills, dinner tickets, and theatrical checks; the multifarious odds and ends that will accumulate in cupboards, be your periodical burnings ever so frequent, or your waste-paper basket system ever so rigorous; among all these it may be that I can find a portfolio—shadowy or substantial matters little—wherein lie nestled, all torn, blotted, faded, mildewed, crumpled, stained, and moth-eaten, some portraits of the old ladies I should like to find now-a-days.

Yes; here is one: The Pretty Old Lady. She must have been

very, very beautiful when young; for in my childish eyes she had scarcely any imperfections, and we all know what acute and unmerciful critics children are. Her hair was quite white; not silvery nor powdery, but pure glossy white, resembling spun glass. I have never been able to make my mind up whether she wore a cap, a hood, or one of those silken head-coverings of the last century called a calash. Whatever she wore, it became her infinitely. I incline, on second thoughts, more to the calash, and think she wore it in lieu of a bonnet when she went abroad, which was but seldom. The portrait I have of the old lady is, indeed, blurred and dimmed by the lapse of many winters, and some tears. Her title of the "pretty old lady" was not given to her lightly. It was bruited many years ago—when ladies of fashion were drunk to in public, and gentlemen of fashion were drunk too in public—that the pretty old lady had been a "reigning toast."

A certain gray silk dress which, as it had always square creases in it, I conjectured to be always new, decorated the person of the pretty old lady. She wore a profusion of black lace, which must have been priceless, for it was continually being mended, and its reversion was much coveted by the old lady's female friends. My aunt Jane, who was tremendously old, and was a lady, but whose faculties decayed somewhat towards the close of her life, was never so coherent (save on the subject of May-day and the sweeps) as when she speculated as to "who was to have the lace" after the old lady's demise. But my aunt Jane died first, and her doubts were never solved. More than this, I can remember a fat-faced old gold watch which the pretty old lady wore at her waist; a plethoric mass of gold, like an oyster grown rich, and knowing the time of day. Attached to this she wore some trinkets—a signet-ring of her grandfather's, a smelling-bottle covered with silver filagree, and a little golden box in the form of a book with clasps, which we waggish youngsters declared to be the old lady's snuff-box, but which I believe now to have been a pouncet-box—the same, perhaps, which the lord, who was perfumed like a milliner, held 'twixt his finger and his thumb upon the battle-field, and which, ever and anon, he gave his nose.

I trust I am not treading upon dangerous ground when I say that two of the chief prettinesses of the pretty old lady were her feet and their covering. "To ladies' eyes a round, boys!" Certainly, Mr. Moore, we can't refuse; but to ladies' feet, a round, boys, also, if you please. Now, the pretty old lady had the prettiest of feet, with the most delicate of gray silk stockings, the understandings of the finest, softest, most lustrous leather that ever came from innocent kid. I will back those feet (to use the parlance of this horse-racing age) and those shoes and stockings against any in the known world, in ancient or modern history or romance: against Dorothea's tiny feet dabbling in the stream; against Musidora's paddling in the cool brook; against Sara la Baigneuse swinging in her silken hammock; against De Grammont's Miss Howard's green stockings; against Madame de Pompadour's golden clocks and red-heeled *mules*; against Noblet's, Taglioni's, Cerito's; against Madame Vestris's, as modelled in wax by Signor N. N.

There are no such feet as the pretty old lady's now; or, if any such exist, their possessors don't know how to treat them. The French ladies are rapidly losing the art of putting on shoes and stockings with taste; and I deliberately declare, in the face of Europe, that I have not seen, within the last three months, in Paris — from the Boulevard des Italiens to the ball of the Prefect of the Seine—twenty pairs of irreproachable feet. The symmetrically arched instep, the geometrical ankle, the gentle curves and undulations, the delicate advancement and retrogression of the foot of beauty, are all falling into oblivion. The American overshoes, the machine-made hosiery, and the trailing draperies, are completing the ruin of shoes and stockings.

The pretty old lady had never been married. Her father had been a man of fashion—a gay man—a first-rate buck, a sparkling rake; he had known lords, he had driven curricles, he had worn the finest of fine linen, the most resplendent of shoe-buckles; he had once come into the possession of five thousand pounds sterling, upon which capital — quite casting the grovelling doctrine of interest to the winds—he had determined to try the

fascinating experiment of living at the rate of five thousand a-year. In this experiment he succeeded to his heart's content for the exact period of one year and one day, after which he had lived (at the same rate) on credit; after that on the credit of his credit; after that on his wits; after that in the rules of the King's Bench; after that on the certainty of making so many tricks nightly at whist; and finally, upon his daughter.

For the pretty old lady, with admirable self-abnegation, had seen her two ugly sisters married; had, with some natural tears, refused Captain Cutts, of the line, whom she loved (but who had nothing but his pay), and had contentedly accepted the office of a governess; whence, after much self-denial, study, striving, pinching, and saving (how many times her little cobwebs of economy were ruthlessly swept away by her gay father's turn for whist and hazard—cobwebs that took years to reconstruct!), she had promoted herself to the dignity of a schoolmistress; governing in that capacity that fine old red-brick ladies' seminary at Paddington—pulled down for the railway now—Porchester House.

'Twas there I first saw the pretty old lady; for I had a cousin receiving her "finishing" at Porchester House, and 'twas there —being at the time some eight years of age—that I first fell in love with an astonishingly beautiful creature, with raven hair and gazelle-like eyes, who was about seventeen, and the oldest girl in the school. When I paid my cousin a visit I was occasionally admitted—being of a milk and watery disposition, and a very little boy of my age—to the honours of the tea-table. I used to sit opposite to this black-eyed Juno, and be fed by her with slices of those curious open-work cross-barred jam tarts, which are so frequently met with at genteel tea-tables. I loved her fondly, wildly: but she dashed my spirits to the ground one day by telling me not to make faces. I wonder whether she married a duke!

The pretty old lady kept school at Porchester House for many, many years, supporting and comforting that fashionable fellow her father. She had sacrificed her youth, the firstlings of her beauty, her love, her hopes, everything. The gay fellow had

grown a little paralytic at last; and, becoming very old, and imbecile, and harmless, had been relegated to an upper apartment in Porchester House. Here, for several years, he had vegetated in a sort of semi-fabulous existence as the "old gentleman," very many of the younger ladies being absolutely unaware of him, till, one evening, a neat coffin with plated nails and handles arrived at Porchester House for somebody aged seventy-three, and the cook remarked to the grocer's young man that the "old gentleman" had died that morning.

The pretty old lady continued the education of generations of black-eyed Junos, in French, geography, the use of the globes, and the usual branches of a polite education, long after her father's death. Habit is habit; Lieutenant-Colonel Cutts had died of a fever in the Walcheren expedition—so the pretty old lady kept school at Porchester House until she was very, very old. When she retired, she devised all her savings to her ugly sisters' children; and calmly, cheerfully, placidly prepared to lie, herself, down in her grave. Hers had been a long journey and a sore servitude; but, perhaps, something was said to her at the End about being a good and faithful servant, and that it was well done.

Such is the dim outline which the picture in my portfolio presents to me of the pretty old lady. Sharpened as her pretty features were by age, the gentle touch of years of peace—of an equable mind and calm desires, had passed lovingly over the acuities of her face and softened them. Wrinkles she must have had, for the stern usurer Time will have his bond; but she had smiled her wrinkles away, or had laughed them into dimples. Our just though severe mother, Nature, had rewarded her for having worn no rouge in her youth, no artificial flowers in her spring; and gave her blooming roses in her December. Although the sunset of her eyes was come and they could not burn you up, or melt you as in the noontide, the sky was yet pure, and the luminary sank to rest in a bright halo: the shadows that it cast were long, but sweet and peaceful—not murky and terrible. The night was coming; but it was to be a night starlit with Faith and Hope, and not a season of black storms.

It was for this reason, I think, that being old, feeling old, looking old, proud of being old, and yet remaining handsome, the pretty old lady was so beloved by all the pretty girls. They adored her. They called her "a dear old thing." They insisted upon trying their new bonnets, shawls, scarfs, and similar feminine fallals, upon her. They made her the fashion, and dressed up to her. They never made her spiteful presents of fleecy hosiery, to guard against a rheumatism with which she was not afflicted; or entreated her to tie her face up when she had no tooth-ache; or bawled in her ear on the erroneous assumption that she was deaf—as girls will do, in pure malice, when age forgets its privileges, and apes the levity and sprightliness of youth.

Above all, they trusted her with love-secrets (I must mention, that though a spinster, the pretty old lady was always addressed as Mistress). She was great in love matters—a complete letter-writer, without its verbosity: as prudent as Pamela, as tender as Amelia, as judicious as Hooker, as dignified as Sir Charles Grandison. She could scent a Lovelace at an immense distance, bid Tom Jones mend his ways, reward the constancy of an Uncle Toby, and reform a Captain Booth. I warrant the perverse widow and Sir Roger de Coverley would have been brought together, had the pretty old lady known the parties and been consulted. She was conscientious and severe, but not intolerant and implacable. She did not consider every man in love a "wretch," or every woman in love a "silly thing." She was pitiful to love, for she had known it. She could tell a tale of love as moving as any told to her. Its hero died at Walcheren.

Where shall I find pretty old ladies nowadays? Where are they gone—those gentle, kindly, yet dignified, antiquated dames, married and single?

My young friend Sprigly comes and tells me that I am wrong, and that there are many good old ladies now as of yore. It may be so; it may be that we think those pleasant companionships lost because the years are gone in which we enjoyed them; and that we imagine there are no more old ladies, because those we loved are dead.

IX.

Little Children.

"NO man can tell," wrote that good Bishop of Down, Connor, and Dromore, whose elevation to the mitre in an unbelieving and profligate age makes at least one jewel of pure water in the besmirched diadem of Charles the Second—"No man can tell," wrote Jeremy Taylor, "but he who loves his children, how many delicious accents makes a man's heart dance in the pretty conversation of those dear pledges. Their childishness, their stammering, their little angers, their innocence, their imperfections, their necessities, are so many little emanations of joy and comfort to him that delights in their persons and society."

With all due respect and reverence to my beloved author of the "Golden Grove," the "warbler of poetic prose," I must dissent from his first proposition. A man who loves children *can* tell, without necessarily having any of his own, how delightful is their society, how delicious are their accents, their persons, their little ways. It may be that I write these lines in a cheerless garret, my only friends my books, the only other thing beside me that has life, my lamp; yet do you not think that I can sympathise with, without envying, the merry party at the merry house over the way?—the house with all the windows lighted up, the broughams and hack cabs at the door; the prim, white neck-clothed visitors taking off their paletôts in the passage; the smiling, ringleted, rosy-cheeked, rosy-ribboned young person who attends to the ladies' bonnets and the tea and coffee; the jangling of Collard and Collard's piano; the tinkling of Erard's harp;

the oscillations in their upstairs passage of the negus glasses, the singing, the dancing, the flirtation, and the supper?

Yet, I know nothing about Mrs. Saint-Baffin and her evening party. She never invited me to it: she does not know, very probably, of my existence; but I am sure I wish most sincerely that her "at home" may be perfectly satisfactory and successful; that everybody may get as much as he wants to eat and drink at supper; that the supply of lobster salad and iced champagne may not run short; that Miss Strumminson's "Cossacco della Volga" may be sung by that young lady amid general applause; that all General Fogey's stories may tell, and that none of young Miller's jokes may have been heard before; that the right men may secure their right hats and right wrappers; that all the young ladies may depart duly shawled and bonneted, to the defiance and confusion of the demon cold; that all mammas may be placable, all true lovers satisfied with their innocent flirtations, all stolen camellias, scraps of ribbon, and odd gloves warmly prized; that years to come there may be little children laughing and playing round papa and mamma, all unconscious that papa and mamma first thought of love, and courtship, and matrimony over lobster salad, iced champagne, or the *valse à deux temps* at Mrs. Saint-Baffin's "at home."

Come! Though I am not bidden to the banquet, though there be no cover laid for me at the table matrimonial, may I not feast (though in no ogre fashion) upon little children? Some day, perhaps, Hymen's table may lack guests; and, messengers being sent out into the highways in quest of the lame, the halt, and the blind, I may have a chance.

I might speculate upon little children in a purely negative fashion for some time. For instance, as regards the child being father to the man—of men being but children of a larger growth. These are both very easy things to say; and we get them by heart pat, and somewhat in the parrot manner; and we go on repeating our pet phrase, over and over, backwards and forwards, time after time, till we firmly believe it to be true; and if any one presume to argue or dissent we grow indignant, and cry

"Turn him out," as the member of the Peace Society did the other day, when an opinionated person happened to dissent from the whole hog proposition that the world was to be pacificated, and universal fraternity established, by the lambs shearing the wool off their backs and taking it to the wolves in a neat parcel, with a speech about arbitration.

Now, at the risk of being turned out myself, I must venture to dissent from the axiom that the child is father to the man. I say that he is not. Can you persist in telling me that this fair-haired innocent—this little sportive, prattling, lovable child, with dimpled, dumpling hands that almost fold themselves spontaneously into the attitude of supplication and prayer; with cherry lip—"some bee has stung it newly"—lisping thanksgiving and love; with arms that long to embrace; with eyes beaming confidence, joy, pity, tenderness—am I to be told that this infant is father to yon hulking, sodden, sallow-faced, blue-gilled, crop-haired, leaden-eyed, livid-lipped, bow-shouldered, shrunken-legged, swollen-handed convict, in a hideous gray uniform branded with the broad arrow, with ribbed worsted hose and fetters at his ankles, sullenly skulking through his drudgery under the rattan of an overseer and the bayonet of a marine in Woolwich dockyard? Is the child whom I love and in whom I hope father to yon wretch with a neck already half-dislocated with fear, with limbs half dead, with heart wholly so, who droops on his miserable pallet in Newgate cell, his chin on his breast, his hands between his knees, his legs shambling; the stony walls around him; the taciturn gaolers watching him; a Bible by his side, in whose pages, when he tries to read, the letters slide and fall away from under his eye? Is this the father to—can *this* ever become *that?*

Not only in your world-verbiage must the child be father to the man, but the man is merely a child of a larger growth. I deny it. Some boys are tyrants, bullies, hypocrites, and liars for fear of punishment; thieves, alas! through ill-example, ofttimes. Some girls are tell-tales, jealous, spiteful, slanderous, vain, and giddy, I grant. If you were to tell me that bad boys and girls often grow up to be bad men and women, I should agree with you. The

evil example of you bad men and women begins to corrupt boys and girls early enough, heaven knows; but do not brand the child—you know when infancy begins and childhood terminates—with being but your own wickedness seen through the small end of the glass.

The man a child of larger growth? Did you ever know a man of smaller growth—a child—to discount bills at sixty per cent., and offer you for the balance half cash and the rest poison (put down in the bill as "wine") and opera stalls? Did you ever know a child to pawn his sister's playthings, or rob his playmate of his pocket-money to gamble, and to cheat while gambling, and to go hang or drown himself when he had lost his winnings and his stolen capital? Could you ever discern a hankering in a child to accumulate dollars by trading in the flesh and blood of his fellow-creatures? Did you ever know a child to hoard halfpence in a rag or a teapot, to store rinds of mouldy cheese in secret, or to grow rich in rotten apple-parings? Did you ever hear a child express an opinion that his friend Tommy must eternally be burnt for not holding exactly the same religious opinions as he, Billy, did? Are children false swearers for hire, liars for gain, parasites for profit? Do they begin to throw mud with their earliest pot-hooks and hangers? Do they libel their nurse and vilify the doctor?

Men have their playthings, it is true, and somewhat resemble overgrown children in their puerile eagerness for a blue ribbon, an embroidered garter, a silver cross dangling to a morsel of red silk, or a gilt walking-stick. But will the child crawl in the gutter for the blue ribbon, or walk barefoot over broken bottles for the garter, or wallow in the mire for the gilt walking-stick? I think not. Give him a string of red beads, a penny trumpet, or a stick of barley sugar, and he will let the ribbons and garters go hang. Try to persuade, with your larger growth theory, one of your smaller men to walk backwards down a staircase before the King of Lilliput. Persuade Colonel FitzTommy, aged four, to stand for five hours on one leg behind the King of Lilliput's chair in his box at the Marionette Theatre. Try to induce little Lady Totsey,

aged three, to accede to the proposal of being maid of honour to her doll. Tommy and Totsey leave such tomfooleries to be monopolised by the larger children.

We have another school of axiomatic philosophers, who, abandoning the theorem that manhood is but the enlarged identity of infancy, maintain that the child is an intellectual negation—nothing at all physically or mentally. The enlightened M. Fourier has denied children the possession of sex, calling them Neuters; and numbers of philosophers, with their attendant schools of disciples, have pleased themselves by comparing the child's mind to a blank sheet of paper; innocent, but capable of receiving moral caligraphy, good or bad. The mind of a child like a blank sheet of Bath post! The sheet is fair, hot-pressed, undefiled by blot or erasure, if you will, but not a blank.

In legible, ineffaceable characters thereupon you may read Faith and strong Belief. The child believes without mental reservation; he does not require to be convinced; and if even, now and then, some little struggling dawn of argumentative scepticism leads him to doubt faintly, and to ask how bogey can always manage to live in the cellar among the coals; how the black dog can be on his shoulder, when he sees no dog there; why little boys should not ask questions, and why the doctor should have brought baby with him under his cloak—he is easily silenced by the reply that good children always believe what is told them, and that he must believe; so he *does* believe. His faith was but shaken for a moment. Belief was written too strongly in his little heart to be eradicated by any little logic. Would that when he comes to be a child of larger growth, forsooth, no subtle powers of reasoning should prompt him to dissect and anatomise his body of belief, till nothing but dry bones remain, and it fall into a pit of indifference and scepticism.

That child has a maimed child-mind who does not believe implicitly in all the fairy tales—in the existence of ogres, fairies, giants, and dwarfs. I dare say thousands will read this who have lain a-bed as children, awake, and quaking lest Hurlothrumbo, or the dread Giant Bolivorax, or the wolf that devoured little Red

Riding Hood should enter unto them and devour them. How many do I address who have cherished one especial beanstalk in the back garden as the very identical beanstalk up which Jack clomb, and, in the slightness of their childish vision, deemed that the stalk grew up and up till it reached the wondrous land of faëry—who, also, have firmly believed that the huge pack the old Jew pedlar carried on his back was full of naughty children; and that from parsley-beds, by means of silver spades, fruits—of whose species Mr. Darwin is unaware—were procured.

I remember having, when a very little child, two strong levers of belief. One was a very bright fire-place, with a very bright fender, very bright fire-irons, and a very bright coloured rug before it. I can see them now, all polished steel, brass, and gay worsted work—and all of which I was strictly forbidden to touch. The other was a certain steel engraving in an album: a landscape with a lake, and swans, and ladies with parasols. I know the fire-place now to have been a mere register stove with proper appurtenances, and the picture an engraving of the Park of St. Cloud after Turner; but I declare that I firmly, heartily, uncompromisingly believed then that angels' trumpets were like those fire-irons, and that the gay rug, and the pretty landscape, was an accurate view, if not an actual peep, into Fairyland itself. A little dead sister of mine used to draw what we called fairyland on her slate. 'Twas after all, I dare say, but a vile childish scrawl, done over a half smeared-out game of oughts and crosses, with a morsel of slate pencil, two sticks a halfpenny. Yet I and she and all of us believed in the fairyland she drew. We could pluck the golden fruit on the boughs, and hear the silver-voiced birds, and see the fairy elves with their queen (drawn very possibly with a head like a deformed oyster) dancing beneath the big round moon upon the yellow sands.

I am sure my sister believed her doll was alive and peculiarly susceptible to catching cold from draughts. I am certain that I never questioned the animated nature of the eight-day clock on the staircase that ticked so awfully in the hot, silent summer nights, and gnashed its teeth so ferociously when its weights were

moved. My aunt promised everything when her ship came home; and I believed in the ship that was always coming, and never did come, without one spark of scepticism. I believed in, and shuddered at, all the stories about that famous juvenile (always held up to us as a warning and example, and alluded to as "there was once a little boy who") who was always doing the things he ought not to have done; and was in consequence so perpetually being whipped, caught in door jambs, suspended in the air by meat-hooks, eaten up alive by wild beasts, and burnt to death in consequence of "playing with Tommy at lighting straws," that I have often wondered, so many have been his perils by flood and field, that there should be any of that little boy left.

He is alive though, nevertheless, and still firmly believed in. I was under the necessity the other day of relating a horrible misadventure of his to a little nephew of mine own, showing how the little boy reached over a dining-table to put his fingers into a sugar dish, and came to signal shame by knocking over a tumbler and cutting his fingers therewith; and I am happy to state that my anecdote was not only received as genuine, but met with the additional criticism from my small nephew (his own digits still sticky with the sugar) that it "served the little boy right."

Faith and strong Belief! When children play at King or Queen, or Castles or Schools, they believe that they are in verity the persons they enact. We children of a larger growth yawn through our parts, requiring a great deal of prompting, and waiting, now and again, for the applause; or, if we be of the audience, applaud listlessly, knowing the play to be a deception.

Faith and strong Belief! How is the child to distinguish between the Witch of Endor and the Witch of Edmonton; between Goliah that David slew and the Giant that Jack killed? Let him believe it all in his happy, faithful childhood, I say. Do not think I wish to propagate or encourage error. But that young floweret is too tender yet to bear the crude blast of uncompromising fact. And battle with error in the child's mind as you will, feed him with diagrams and clothe him with Euclid's Elements before he is breeched as you may, the

innate belief that is in him, even though draped in imaginations and harmless fictions, will beat your logic and philosophy hollow.

On that blank sheet of paper to which you compare a child's mind, I find yet more words written that all may read. I find Truth. Prone to believe the most extravagant fictions, because his belief is indiscriminating through innocence, he is yet essentially and legibly a truth-teller and is logically true. If he objects to you or me he tells us candidly, "I don't like you." If asked to assign a reason for his dislike, he answers as candidly: "Because you are old—because you are ugly—because you smell of snuff." If he likes his old nurse better than his new nurse he tells her so plainly. Herein is no cogging, no qualifying, no constructive lying. When he demands a present or *backsheesh*, he employs no bowing or scraping; no beating about the bush to effect his purpose. He says simply, "Give Doddy a sugar-plum," and holds out his hand. Years to come he will learn to cringe and fawn, and write begging letters, and attribute his want of sugar-plums to the hardness of the times, or to his having to "take up a little bill."

So blunt is his truthfulness that it frequently becomes inconvenient and embarrassing. He makes the most alarming revelations, in all innocence and unconsciousness, respecting the malpractices of the servants, and the criticisms passed by his relatives upon the appearance and manners of their friends and acquaintances. He suffers in the flesh for this, and is a martyr to his truthfulness. Not strong enough in purpose to hate, he is yet afraid and ashamed to lie. He blushes and stammers over an untruth. 'Tis practice makes the liar perfect. The infant knows the truth and its seat, for it is in his heart, and he has no need to go wandering about the earth in search of it, like that mad fellow who, hearing that Truth lay at the bottom of a well, jumped into a well and was drowned; finding indeed Truth at the bottom, for he found Death.

You, foolish, cockering mothers, teach your children to lie, when you aid them in denying or concealing their faults from those who would be stern with them. You, unreasoning, im-

petuous parents, nourish lying scorpions in your bosom, when you beat your children savagely for an involuntary accident, for a broken vase, or a torn frock. You give the child a motive for concealment; you sow lying seed that will bear black fruit; you make truth to mean punishment, and falsehood impunity.

In letters as large and bold, as beautiful and clear to view, is written on the sheet of paper you are pleased to call blank in little children's minds the word Charity. Large-hearted, open-handed, self-denying charity. Unreasoning, indiscreet, indiscriminate, perchance, but still charity of the Christian sort, which, done in secret, shall be rewarded openly. I am compelled to admit that little children know nothing about the Mendicity Society, that they have never perused the terrific leaders in *The Times* against street mendicancy, and the sin of indiscriminate almsgiving; that they would, if they could read bad writing, become an easy prey to begging-letter impostors, and would never be able to steel their hearts against the appeals to the benevolent in the newspapers. I must own, too, that their charity does not stop at humanity, but extends itself to the animal creation. I never saw a child feed a donkey with macaroons; but I have seen one little girl press pound-cake upon a Shetland pony, and another little girl give half of her bread and butter to a four-footed acquaintance of the Newfoundland breed.

I have watched the charitable instincts of children from babyhood to schoolhood, when hopes and cankering fears, desire of praise, solicitude for favour and lust of gain begin, shutting up charity in an iron-bound strong box of small-worldliness. Children love to give. Is it to feed the ducks in the park, or slide warm pennies into the palsied hands of cripples, or drop them into the trays of blind men's dogs, or pop them, smiling, into slits of money-boxes, or administer eleemosynary sustenance to Bunny and Tiny the rabbits, or give the pig a "poon"—to give is indeed their delight. They want no tuition in charity: it is in them, God-sent.

Yonder little chubby "sheet of blank stationery," who is mumbling a piece of parliament in his nurse's arms, has scarcely

consciousness of muscular power sufficient to teach him to hold the sweetmeat fast; yet, if I ask baby, half by word half by gesture, to give me a bit, this young short-coated Samaritan—who not long since began to "take notice," and can only just ejaculate da-da, ma-ma—will gravely remove the parliament from his own lips and offer it to mine. Were he a very few months older he would clutch it tighter in his tiny hand, and break a piece off, and give it me. Is not this charity? He does not know, this young neophyte, that the parliament is moist and sticky with much sucking and mumbling; that I am too big to eat parliament; and that it is mean and paltry in me, a great, hulking, able-bodied, working man, to beg cates of him, a helpless infant. But he knows in his instinctive sapience that he cannot fill my belly with wise saws, or with precepts of political economy. He cannot quote Adam Smith, Ricardo, or S. G. O.* to me; he administers, in his instinctive charity, corporeal sustenance to my corporeal necessity. The avaricious infant is a monster.

What word is that that shines so brightly—whose letters dance and glitter like precious gems on the so-called blank scroll? Love. Instinct of instincts, inborn of all innate things, little children begin to love as soon as they begin to live. When mere flaccid helpless babes their tiny faces mantle with smiles—ah! so full of love and tenderness—in their sleep. The first use they make of their arms is to clasp them round the neck of those they love. And whom will they not love? If the witch Sycorax had nursed Miranda, and Caliban had been her foster-brother, the little monster and the little maiden would have loved each other, and Prospero's little child would have kissed and fondled her hideous nurse. The first words children utter are words of love. And these are not necessarily taught them; for their very inarticulate ejaculations are full of love.

They love all things. The parrot, though he bites them; the cat, though she scratches; the great, bushy, blundering house-

* The Rev. Lord Sidney Godolphin Osborne, whose frequent letters to *The Times* newspaper at this epoch were a notable feature of the leading journal.

dog; the poultry in the yard; the wooden-legged one-eyed negro who brings the beer; the country lout with clouted shoon who smells so terribly of the stable; the red-faced cook, the grubby little knife-boy, the foolish fat scullion, the cross nurse. They love all these; together with horses, trees, gardens, and toys, and break their little hearts (easily mended again, thank heaven) if they are obliged to part from them. And, chiefer still, they love that large man with the gruff voice, the blue rough chin, the large eyes, whose knees comprise such an inexhaustible supply of cock-horses always standing at livery, yet always ready to ride post-haste to Coventry: they love papa. And, chiefest of all, they love her of the soft voice, the smiles, the tears, the hopes, the cares, the tenderness—who is all in all, the first, the last to them, in their tender, fragile, happy childhood.

Mamma is the centre of love. Papa was an after-acquaintance. He improves upon acquaintance, too; but mamma was always with them to love, to soothe, to caress, to care for, to watch over. When a child wakes up hot and feverish from some night dream, it is upon his mother he calls. Each childish pain, each childish grief, each childish difficulty is to be soothed, assuaged, explained by her. The pair have no secrets; they understand each other. The child clings to her. The little boy in the Greek epigram that was creeping down a precipice was invited to his safety, when nothing else could induce him to return, by the sight of his mother's breast.

You who have little children and love them—you will have borne patiently with me, I know, through all these trivialities. And you, strong-minded philosophers who, "celibate, sit like a fly in the heart of an apple," and dwell indeed in perpetual sweetness, but sit alone and are confined and die in singularity, excuse my puerility, my little theme, my smaller argument, my smallest conclusions. Remember the Master suffered little children to come unto him, and that, strong-minded philosophers as we are, we were all of us, once, but little helpless innocents.

X.

Travels in Search of Beef.

IF I have a mission upon this earth (apart from the patent and notable one of being a frightful example to the rising generation of blighted existence and misused energies)—that mission is, I believe, Beef. I am a Cœlebs, not in search of a wife, as in Mrs. Hannah More's white-neckclothed novel, but in search of beef. I have travelled far and wide to find it—good, tender, nourishing, juicy, succulent; and when I die, I hope that it will be inscribed on my tombstone, "Here lies one who sought for beef. Tread lightly on his grave: *quia multum amavit.*"

Next to the Habeas Corpus and the Freedom of the Press, there are few things that the English people have a greater respect for, and a livelier faith in, than beef. They bear, year after year, with the same interminable unvarying series of woodcuts of fat oxen in the columns of the illustrated newspapers; they are never tired of crowding to the Smithfield Club cattle show; and I am inclined to think that it is their honest reverence for beef which has induced them to support so long the obstruction and endangerment of the thoroughfares of the metropolis by oxen driven to slaughter. Beef is a great connecting link and bond of better feeling between the great classes of the commonwealth. Do not dukes hob and nob with top-booted farmers over the respective merits of shorthorns and Alderneys? Does not the noble Marquis of Argentfork give an ox to be roasted whole on the village green when his son, the noble Viscount Silvercoral, comes of age.

Beef makes boys. Beef nerves our navvies. The bowmen who

IN SEARCH OF BEEF.

won Cressy and Agincourt were beef-fed, and had there been more and better beef in the Crimea some years ago, our soldiers would have borne up better under the horrors of a Tauridan winter. We feast on beef at the great Christian festival. A baron of beef at the same time is enthroned in St. George's Hall, in Windsor's ancient castle, and is borne in by the footmen in scarlet and gold. Charles the Second knighted a loin of beef; and I have a shrewd suspicion that the famous Sir Bevis of Southampton was but an ardent admirer and doughty knight-errant in the cause of beef. And who does not know the tradition that, even as the first words of the new-born Gargantua were "*A boyre! à boyre!*"—signifying that he desired a draught of Burgundy wine—so the first intelligible sounds that the infant Guy of Warwick ever spake were "Beef, beef!"

When the weary pilgrim reaches the beloved shores of England after a long absence, what first does he remark—after the incivility of the custom-house officers—but the great tankard of stout and the noble round of cold beef in the coffee-room of the hotel? He does not cry "*Io Bacche! Evöe Bacche!*" because beef is not Bacchus. He does not fall down and kiss his native soil, because the hotel carpet is somewhat dusty, and the action would be, besides, egregious; but he looks at the beef, and his eyes filling with tears, a corresponding humidity takes place in his mouth; he kisses the beef; he is so fond of it that he could eat it all up; and he does ordinarily devour so much of it to his breakfast, that the thoughtful waiter gazes at him and murmurs to his napkin, "This man is either a cannibal or a pilgrim gray who has not seen Albion for many years."

By beef I mean, emphatically, the legitimate, unsophisticated article. Give me my beef, hot or cold, roast, boiled, or broiled; but away with your beef-kickshaws, your beef-stews, your beef-haricos, your corned beef, your hung beef, and your spiced beef! I don't think there is anything so contemptible, fraudulent, adulterine in the world (of cookery) as a beef sausage. I have heard that it is a favourite dish with pickpockets at their raffle-suppers. I believe it. There was a boy at school with me in the

bygone—a day-boy—who used to bring a clammy brownish powder, in a sandwich-box, with him for lunch. He called it powdered beef, and he ate this mahogany-sawdust-looking mixture between slices of stale bread-and-butter. He was an ill-conditioned boy who had begun the world, in the face-grinding sense, much too early. He lent halfpence at usury, and dealt in "sock" (which was our slang for surreptitious sweet-stuff); and I remember with what savage pleasure I fell upon and beat him in the course of a commercial transaction involving a four-bladed penknife he had sold me, and which wouldn't cut—no, not even slate-pencil. But the penknife was nothing more than a pretext. I beat him for his beef. It was bruited about afterwards that he was of Jewish parentage, and I heard that when he began life he turned out badly.

I have merely ventured the above remarks on the bovine topic generally, to preface the experiences I have to record of some recent travels in search of beef I have made in the capital of France. One might employ oneself better, perhaps, than in transcribing the result of a week's hankering after the fleshpots; and surely the journey in search of bread is long and wearisome enough that we might take beef as it comes, and thankfully. But, as I have said, beef is my mission. I am a collector of bovine experiences, as some men collect editions of Horace, and some Raffaelle's Virgins, and some broadsides, and some butterflies. And I know that there are moralities to be found in beef as well as in pre-Adamite zoology and the Vestiges of Creation.

Let me first sum up all the knowledge I have acquired on the subject, by stating my firm conviction that there is no beef in Paris—I mean, no beef fit to be eaten by a philobosopher. Some say that the French cut their meat the wrong way, that they don't hang it properly, that they don't hang it enough, that they beat it, that they overcook it. But I have tasted infinite varieties of French beef of the first, second, and third categories. I have had it burnt to a cinder and I have had it very nearly raw. I have eaten it in private English families resident in Paris,

and dressed by English cooks. It is a delusion: there is no beef in Lutetia.

The first beef I tried in my last campaign was the evening I dined at His Lordship's. Don't be alarmed, my democratic friend. I am not upon Lord Cowley's* visiting list, nor are any coroneted cards ever left at my door on the sixth storey. I did not receive a card from the British Embassy on the occasion of the last ball at the Hôtel de Ville; and I am ashamed to confess that, so anxious was I to partake of the hospitality of the Prefect of the Seine (the toilettes and the iced punch are perfect at his balls), that I was mean enough to foreswear temporarily my nationality, and to avail myself of the card of Colonel Waterton Privilege of Hardshellopolis, Ga., said colonel being at that time, and in all probability exceedingly sick, in his state-room of the United States steamer "Forked Lightning," in the middle of the Atlantic ocean. But by His Lordship's I mean an Anglo-French restaurant—named after a defunct English city eating-house—situate near the Place de la Concorde, and where I heard that real English roast beef was to be obtained at all hours in first-rate condition.

Now, there is one thing that I do not like abroad—yea, two that are utterly distasteful to me. The one thing is my countrymen's usual hotel. This house of refection I have generally found exceedingly uncomfortable. So I was disposed to look somewhat coldly upon His Lordship's invitation, as printed upon placards and stencilled on the walls, till I was assured that his beef was really genuine, and that he was an Englishman without guile.

His Lordship's mansion I found unpretending, even to obscurity. There was no *porte-cochère*, no court-yard, no gilt railings, nor green verandahs. His Lordship's hotel was, in fact, only a little slice of a shop, with one dining-room over it; for which, I was told, he paid an enormous rent—some thousands of francs a-year. In his window were displayed certain English viands pleasant to the sight: a mighty beef-steak pie just cut; the kidney end of a loin of veal, with real English stuffing,

* Earl Cowley was British Ambassador to France at this period.

palpable to sight; some sausages that might have been pork, and of Epping; some potatoes, in their homely brown jackets, just out at elbows, as your well-done potatoes should be, with their flannel under-garments peeping through; and a spherical mass, something of the size and shape of a bombshell, dark in colour, speckled black and white, and which my beating heart told me was a plum-pudding. A prodigious Cheshire cheese, rugged as Helvellyn, craggy as Criffell, filled up the background like a range of yellow mountains. At the base there were dark forests of bottles branded with the names of Allsopp, and Bass, and Guinness, and there were cheering announcements, framed and glazed, respecting Pale Ale on draught, LL whisky, and Genuine Old Tom.* I rubbed my hands in glee. "Ha, ha!" I said internally. "Nothing like our British aristocracy, after all. The true stock, sir. May His Lordship's shadow never diminish."

His Lordship's down-stairs apartment was somewhat inconveniently crowded with English grooms and French *palefreniers*, and with a lamentable old Frenchman, with a pipe as strong as Samson, a cap, cotton in his ears, and rings in the lobes thereof, who had learnt nothing of English but the oaths, and was cursing some very suspicious-looking meat (not my beef, I hope) most energetically. I have an opinion that stables and the perfume thereof are pretty nearly analogous the whole world over; so, at the invitation of a parboiled-looking man in a shooting-jacket and a passion (who might have been His Lordship himself for aught I knew), I went up-stairs. There was an outer chamber, with benches covered with red cotton velvet, and cracked marble tables, like an indifferent café; where some bearded men were making a horrible rattle with their dominoes, and smoking their abominable cigars (surely a course of French cigars is enough to cure the most inveterate smoker of his love for the weed!). This

* Our neighbours have yet much to learn about our English manners and customs. In the Foyer of the Grand Opera, I saw, not very long ago, a tastefully enamelled placard announcing that "Genuine Old Tom" was to be had at the buffet. Imagine Sir Harcourt Courtley asking the Countess of Swansdown, in the crush-room of Covent Garden Theatre, if she would take half-a-quartern of gin!

somewhat discomposed me; but I was soon fain to push forward into the next saloon, where the tables were out for dining; and taking my seat, to wait for beef.

There was myself and a black man, and his (white) wife, the Frenchman with the spectacles, the Frenchman with the bald head (I speak of them generically, for you are sure to meet their fellows at every public dining-table abroad), and the poor old Frenchman with the wig, the paralytic head, and the shaking hands that trifle with the knives and forks, as though they were red-hot. There were half-a-dozen other sons of Gaul, who, with their beards, *cache-nez*, and paletôts, all made to pattern, might have been one another's brothers; two ancient maiden ladies, who looked like English governesses, who had passed, probably, some five-and-thirty years in Paris, and had begun to speak a little of the language; a rude young Englishman, who took care to make all the company aware of the locality of his birthplace; an English working engineer, long resident abroad, much travel-worn, and decidedly oily, who had a voice like a crank, and might have been the identical engineer that Mr. Albert Smith met on the Austrian Lloyd's steamer; and a large-headed little boy, with a round English jacket, who sat alone, eating mournfully, and whom I could not help fancying to be some little friendless scholar in a great French school, whose *jour de sortie* it was, and who had come here to play at an English dinner. The days be short to thee, little boy with the large head! May they fly quickly till the welcome holidays, when thou wilt be forwarded, per rail and boat, to the London Bridge station of the South Eastern Railway, to be left till called for! I know from sad experience how very weary are the strange land and the strange bed, the strange lessons and the strange playmates, to thy small English heart!

Now appeared a gaunt, ossified waiter, with blue black hair, jaws so closely shaven that they gave him an unpleasant resemblance to the grand inquisitor of the Holy Office in disguise seeking for heretics in a cook-shop, and who was, besides, in a perpetual cold perspiration of anger against the irate man in the shooting-jacket below, and carried on fierce verbal warfare with

him down the staircase. This waiter rose up against me, rather than addressed me, and charged me with a pike of bread, cutting the usual immense slice from it. I mildly suggested roast beef, wincing, it must be owned, under the eye of the cadaverous waiter, who looked as if he were accustomed to duplicity, and did not believe a word that I was saying.

"*Ah! rosbif!*" he echoed, "*bien saignant, n'est ce pas?*"

Now, so far from liking my meat *bien saignant*, I cannot even abide the sight of it rare, and I told him so. But he repeated "*bien saignant,*" and vanished.

He came again, though, or rather his pallid face protruded itself over the top of the box where I sat (there were boxes at His Lordship's), and asked—

"Paint portare? p'lale? ol' ale?"

I was nettled, and told him sharply that I would try the wine, if he could recommend it. Whereupon there was silence, and then I heard a voice crying down a pipe, "Paint portare!"

He brought me my dinner, and I didn't like it. It was *bien saignant*, but it wasn't beef, and it swam in a dead sea of gravy that was not to my taste; fat from strange animals seemed to have been grafted on to the lean. I did not get on better with the potatoes, which were full of promise, like a park hack, and unsatisfactory in the performance. I tried some plum-pudding afterwards; but, if the proof of the pudding be in the eating, that pudding remains unproved to this day; for, when I tried to fix my fork in it, it rebounded away across the room, and hit the black man on the leg. I would rather not say anything about the porter, if you please; and perhaps it is well to be brief on the subject of the glass of hot hollands-and-water which I tried afterwards, in a despairing attempt to be convivial; for it smelt of the midnight-lamp, like an erudite book, and of the midnight oil-can, and had the flavour of the commercial turpentine rather than of the odoriferous juniper. I consoled myself with some Cheshire cheese, and asked the waiter if he had the *Presse*.

"Ze *Time* is 'gage," he answered.

"I did not want *The Times*. I wanted the *Presse*."

"Sare," he repeated wrathfully, "ze *Time* is 'gage. *Le Journal Anglais* (he accentuated this spitefully) is 'gage."

He would have no further commerce with me after this; and, doubtlessly, thinking that an Englishman who couldn't eat his beef underdone, or indeed at all, and preferred the *Presse* to *The Times* newspaper, was an outcast and a renegade, abandoned me to my evil devices, and contented himself with crying "*Voila!*" from the murky distance without coming when I called. He even declined to attend to receive payment, and handed me over for that purpose to a long French boy in a blouse, whose feet had evidently not long been emancipated from the pastoral *sabots*, whose hair was cropped close to his head (in the manner suggesting county gaol at home, and ignorance of small-tooth combs abroad), and who had quite a flux of French words, and tried to persuade me to eat *civet de lièvre* that was to be served up at half-past seven of the clock.

But I would have borne half a hundred disappointments similar to this dinner for the sake of the black man. Legs and feet! he was a character! He sat opposite to me, calm, contented, magnificent, proud. He was as black as my boot and as shiny. His woolly head, crisped by our bounteous mother Nature, had unmistakably received a recent touch of the barber's tongs. He was perfumed; he was oiled; he had moustaches (as I live!) twisted out into long rats' tails by means of *pommade hongroise*. He had a tip. He had a scarlet Turkish cap with a long blue tassel. He had military stripes down his pantaloons. He had patent leather boots. He had shirt-studs of large circumference, pins, gold waistcoat buttons, and a gorgeous watch-chain. I believe he had a crimson under-waistcoat. He had the whitest of cambric handkerchiefs, a ring on his forefinger, and a stick with an overpowering gold knob. He was the wonderfullest nigger that the eye ever beheld.

He had a pretty little English wife—it is a fact, madam—with long auburn ringlets, who it was plain to see was desperately in love with and desperately afraid of him. It was marvellous to behold the rapt, fond gaze with which she contemplated him

as he leaned back in his chair after dinner and touched up his glistening ivories with a toothpick. Equally marvellous was the condescension with which he permitted her to eat her dinner in his august presence, and suffered her to tie round his neck a great emblazoned shawl like a flag.

Who could he have been? The father of the African twins; the Black Malibran's brother; Baron Pompey; King Mousalakatzic of the Orange River; Prince Bobo; some other sable dignitary of the empire of Hayti; or the renowned Soulouque himself, incognito? Yet, though affable to his spouse, he was a fierce man to the waiter. The old blood of Ashantee, the ancient lineage of Dahomey, could ill brook the shortcomings of that cadaverous servitor. There was an item in the reckoning that displeased him.

"Wass this, sa?" he cried, in a terrible voice. "Wass this, sa? Fesh your mas'r, sa!"

The waiter cringed and fled, and I laughed.

"Good luck have thou with thine honour: ride on——" honest black man; but oh, human nature, human nature! I would not be your nigger for many dollars. More rib-roasting should I receive, I am afraid, than ever Uncle Tom received from fierce Legree.

I have not dined at His Lordship's since—I would dine there any day to be sure of the company of the black man—but I have more to say about beef.

XI.

Further Travels in Search of Beef.

I HAD been recounting my want of success in pursuit of beef in Paris, and my deplorable break-down at His Lordship's Larder there, to my friend Lobb (telling him, too, all about the cadaverous waiter, and the haughty nigger and his pretty wife); and he, a renowned beefeater, as well as an able financier, appeared considerably interested in my narrative. Lobb is a man of few words, and not emotional; yet he was good enough to say on this occasion that he sympathised with me, and would put me in the way of procuring good beef shortly. We were conversing soon afterwards on the interesting subject of the variation of the exchanges of Europe, and Lobb was endeavouring to explain to me by what fortuitous inspiration of rascality the Neapolitan *cambieri*—those greatest thieves of the world—charged, during the Russian war, a discount of nineteen per cent. upon English money, and of no less than thirty-five per cent upon their dear friends', the Austrians', metallics (which operation of finance secured my still stronger adherence to the chorus of a clap-trap song current about 'forty-eight, that I had "rather be an Englishman"). Lobb stopped suddenly, however, in the midst of his exposition of the mysteries of agio and decimals, and, bending his bushy eyebrows upon me, said, "De blace vor de peef is in the Rue Bicdonbin" (meaning the Rue Pictonpin). I bowed my head meekly in acquiescence to the enunciation of this assertion, whereupon he continued concisely, "Vriday, half-bast vive," and thereupon plunged into the history of the *Crédit Foncier*, and the Danish Five per Cents.

I noticed that Lobb, for the next day or two, rather avoided

me than otherwise, and that he was studiously chary of any allusion to the Rue Pictonpin; but, as I knew him, though what is termed a "close customer," to be a man of his word, I kept my appointment on Friday evening. Lobb was to be found at a great banking house in the Rue de la Paix—a suite of palatial apartments, with polished floors, stuccoed ceiling, carpeted and gilt balustraded staircase, walnut-tree desks, velvet *fauteuils*, moderator lamps, a porter's lodge furnished as splendidly as an English stockbroker's parlour; everything, in short, that could conduce to splendour, except money. None of that was to be seen.

To one accustomed to the plethoric amount of outward and visible wealth in an English banking house—the heaps of sovereigns, the great scales, the piles of bank-notes, the orange-tawny money-bags, the shovels dinted in the service of Plutus, the burly porters, the ranges of fire-buckets (suggestive of the wealth of the Indies to be protected)—the counting-houses of the Parisian banker present but a Barmecide feast of riches. In place, too, of the strong-backed ledgers, the fat cash-books and fatter cashiers, of Messrs. Crœsus and Co., the French seem to keep their voluminous accounts in meagre little pamphlets like schoolboys' copy-books; and the clerks are hungry-looking men with beards. Fancy Messrs. Crœsus confiding an account to a clerk with a chin tuft!

As far as I am able to judge, all the disposable bullion in Paris is displayed in little shop windows like greengrocers' stalls, for the special admiration of the Palais Royal loungers and the accommodation of any Englishman in want of change for a five-pound note. At the banking houses the cash-box is like an *eau de Cologne* box, and the principal amount of business transacted seems to consist in stamping bits of paper, executing elaborate flourishes to signatures, shifting sand about on wet ink, and asking for lights for cigars.

I found Lobb, that master of finance, peaceably employed in his bureau, eating two sous' worth of hot chestnuts over a bronze stove of classic design. Nobody came for any money; and,

peeping into one or two other bureaux, as we left, I caught a glimpse of another clerk, signing his name all over a sheet of blotting-paper, whistling as he scribbled for want of thought; and of another absorbed in twisting his moustaches before a pier-glass (a pier-glass in a bank!). Yet banking hours were not over—they never are in France—and I dare say business to the amount of some hundred thousand francs was done before they closed. A shop-boy let us out, a bullet-headed fellow with a perpetual grin, a blue bib and apron, and who, Lobb informed me, was even more stupid than he looked. He was reading a novel. And of such is a Parisian bank.

It was a pouring wet night—the rain coming down, not in the sudden, sluicelike, floodgate English fashion, but in a concentrated, compact, fine, unceasing descent, cautiously and remorselessly, like the sand in an hour-glass, or the conversation of a fluent and well-informed bore. The mud had come to stop a long night, and leaped up at you, even to your eyebrows, like a dog glad to recognise a friend. With the rain had come his inseparable French friends, bad odours and biting wind. They had the pavement all to themselves, and tossed the passengers about like ships in the ocean. There were some thousands of ankles abroad, for those who cared to see them; and the tortures of the Inquisition had been revived in the shape of numberless umbrellas, which were probed into your eyes, jammed into your ribs, thrust between your legs, and which gave off cascades, dexterously, down the nape of your neck. Prudent people had all sought safe anchorage in the "Passages;" the wealthy had chartered carriages, and were deciding the knotty point as to which is the pleasanter—to run, or to be run over. I met a lamentable dog in the Rue Montmartre, wet through. He was evidently homeless, and was going towards the Cité, perhaps to sell himself to a *chiffonnier*, probably to drown himself.

I believe that there is no such street in Paris as the Rue Pictonpin, and that Lobb, for some occult reasons of his own, gave me a fabulous address, for I was never able to find out the place afterwards by daylight, nor is it to be discovered in any

of the maps of the twelve arrondissements of Paris. We wandered for, it appeared to me, hours; stumbling, splashing through streets which knew not foot-pavements, which yet boasted the mediæval gutter—a Niagara of mud—which were villainous in aspect and vile in smell. The lantern of the rag-picker crossed our path, like a Will-o'-the-wisp; viragos quarrelled at the doors of charcoal sheds; porters tottered by with gigantic sacks, like corpses, on their backs; that novelty in civilised Paris, a drunken man, staggered out of a wine-shop, and asked us, amid the interruptions of a hiccough, what o'clock it was; and now and then some great lumbering omnibus, with red eyes, like a bloodshot demon's, swooped by, driving us against the wall, and casting mud into our teeth. I was just on the point of revolting, and telling Lobb that I would see his beef hung before I would go any further, when he stopped (the cautious man was enveloped in waterproofing, and I had a great-coat like a sponge), and said,

"Dis is de peef-shop."

We passed under a scowling archway into a court-yard, seemingly opening into half-a-dozen others. There was some gas about; but the rain must have permeated the pipes, for the gas blinked and glimmered dubiously, and seemed disposed to burn blue. Everywhere on the wall, from the basement to where the hideous height of stone and plaster was lost in darkness, there were stuck those bewildering placards concerning the names and occupations of the tenants of the different floors, that drive a man mad at Paris, and send him up to the sixth storey in quest of a tailor who lives on the ground floor. Of course there was a hairdresser in the house; of course there were "*Modes*" on the second floor; of course there was a dentist, whose hideous armoury of dead men's fangs and waxen gums grinned at you from a glass case; of course there was a professor of photography; together with the depôt of some *Société Générale* for the sale of medicated chocolate, camphorated pomatum, hygienic asphalte, Athenian eyewater, philanthropic corn-plaster, or similar excrescences of civilisation. No French

house could be complete without those branches of industry. But the beef was in the second floor along with the "*Modes;*" at least a hot, unsavoury, meaty smell began in the court-yard and ended there; so I followed it and Lobb, irrigating the stairs involuntarily as I went with the drippings from my garments.

I did not arrive in the most joyous frame of mind; my very appetite was washed out of me. Nor did it increase my merriment of mood, when—pushing aside a green baize-covered door—Lobb preceded me into a bleak ante-chamber, very cold and barren, where there were some bare deal boards on tressels, and a cemetery of empty bottles.

"Sometime dey are zo vull, we dine here," whispered Lobb.

I shuddered. I would as soon have dined in a dead-house. But there was a curtain hanging across a doorway, which he drew aside, and then I entered into the real temple where the beef was to be.

Silence, deep, dead, marrow-freezing silence! From the fifty guests or so, at least; but from their fifty knives and forks a dull clicking; and, now and then, some smothered sounds of gurgling, with, once in every five minutes on an average, a subdued clatter of plates. But not a word.

There was an outer and an inner saloon, vast, lofty, well-proportioned; but indescribably faded, tarnished. On the old grimy walls, bedewed with the tears of generations of damp, there were here and there painted panels, surrounded by festoons of ghastly flowers; and in the panels were mildewed Cupids, and cracked shepherds making love to washed-out shepherdesses. There were gilt cornices; and on the ceiling was painted the apotheosis of somebody, obscured, bleared, almost undiscoverable beneath the smoke of a century, and the fumes of a hecatomb of beef. There was a mirror over one mantelpiece, surrounded by obsolete framework; and on the shelf a lugubrious clock, with a heavy mass of carving representing Orestes pursued by the Eumenides, or Clytemnestra inciting Ægisthus to slay Agamemnon, or some equally lively classical episode, ticked dolorously. There were four long tables covered with doubtful table-cloths;

three full of guests eating with gloomy avidity, the fourth empty. Dim oil lamps burnt around.

Nobody offered us a seat; nobody seemed to acknowledge our presence; no waiter so much as looked at us. One man only, a bald-headed biped in a long coat, who was standing by the funereal clock, took out an ebony snuff-box, just glanced at me, as if to tell me that if I thought he were about to offer me a pinch I was very much mistaken, took a double pinch himself and sneezed. By Lobb's direction I secured a seat at the vacant table, as near the centre as possible. From minute to minute there dropped in men in cloaks, men in paletôts, men in spencers, men in many-collared "carricks." Some were decorated, a few wore moustaches, but the vast majority were old and clean-shaven, and looked like men of the First Empire. One little old man, with a round scalp polished like a billiard ball, wore a coat-collar of unusual height and stiffness, for the purpose, I believe to this day, of concealing a pigtail, which he persisted in wearing, but was ashamed to show. Nobody took any notice of us; they did not even bring us bread or wine. There were knives and forks and napkins, but one cannot eat these things. This could not be a dining-house. It was the Silent Tomb.

It was, in sober reality, though it looked so much like a family vault, a table d'hôte, at thirty-six sous, held in a dilapidated nobleman's mansion, and of the order of cookery known as the *cuisine bourgeoise*. The rule was that, as the tables filled, and not till then, the dinner was served; so that if you arrived a moment after the number of occupants of table number one was completed, you had very probably to wait a quarter of an hour before table number two was gladdened with the joyful appearance of the soup.

It seemed to me, on this occasion, as if I should have to wait all night. Lobb relapsed into mental calculations—possibly about Chilian bonds (deferred), and I was left entirely to my own resources. The little man with the supposed pigtail, who was my neighbour, was either hopelessly deaf or obstinately taciturn. To my remarks about the weather he answered not a word. A man opposite me, with a large chest, a flapped waistcoat, and the face

of a horse (his wig being brushed up over his eyes like blinkers), leaned over the table, and fixed his gelatinous eyes—not on me, but on the wall behind, till he filled me with a vague terror and an invincible tendency to picture him changing into the figure-head of a ship bearing down on me to transfix and scuttle me. A palsied dotard, with a head like a pear grown on one side—and yet he was the most brilliant wit of the party—wagged his toothless jaws, and made a chop at me with his knife—so it struck my fancy at least; although, very likely, poor old gentleman, he was only hungry and impatient for his dinner.

And the grim silence of the men, and the unholy sounds made by the inanimate objects, and the dreadful ticking of the clock, beating the Dead March in Saul on the muffled drum of my ear, so fretted, harried, exasperated, and crazed me, that I would have given a hundred francs for a woman to enter the room, five hundred for permission to burst into a howl, to sing, to stamp on some one's toes, to send a bottle flying at the head of the man with the figure-head face—to do anything to provoke a commotion in this dreadful, dreadful Silent Tomb.

There were thirteen guests mustered out of the twenty-four, when I thought I must either speak or die. Lobb had slipped out to confer with the landlady (there *was* a landlady), and I had not even the consolation of abusing him for bringing me to such a place. I tried to divert myself by conjuring up images of what the grim restaurant had been a hundred years ago. To what marquis, fermier-général, or sous-intendant the great hotel had belonged; who painted those stained panels, who that misty apotheosis. Of what gay scenes, what nights of revelry, these uncommunicative halls of gloom had been spectators. Some one must have talked there at some time or other; the walls must once have echoed to the laughter of the marchionesses in brocaded sacks, of marquises with red-heeled shoes—with the madrigals of enamoured chevaliers in bag-wigs, the gallantries of gay mousquetaires, the pert sayings of spruce little abbés, the epigrams of snuffy wits who drank too much coffee and wrote for the Encyclopædia. Oh, for my grandmother's ghost to revisit for a moment

the haunts of her contemporaries—if she would but open her mouth and chatter!

At extremest length, when the wheel in the cistern seemed about to make its last revolution, Lobb returned; the last man of the twenty-four indispensable guests took his place, and a solemn lady in black—not my grandmother's ghost, though she would not have dressed the character badly, but the mistress of the establishment—glided into the room. Then a spruce man in raven black, who closely resembled an undertaker, took his seat by me as president, and proceeded to ladle the soup out of a huge tureen.

I had grown so accustomed by this time to take the Silent Tomb for granted, and to consider myself *pro tem.* as a member of a burial club, that, had a boiled death's head with parsley and butter formed the first course, I don't think I should have evinced much surprise. I contemplated, too, with a contented sort of stony apathy, four waiters, like mutes, who came up as I imagined (my retina must have been affected by this time), perpendicularly, behind as many chairs. I supposed they placed the array of half-filled bottles of wine which suddenly appeared on the table, and which were not there before. I did not care to inquire, neither did it much matter, whether it were by human agency or not that a small clothes-basketful of household bread was passed around. One thing, however, became manifest. If the guests were dumb, they were not at least palsied; for a fiercer or more active attack upon a bread-basket I never saw. The majority took two pieces; and the reputed possessor of the pigtail carried off a whole armful of the staff of life.

I am bound to admit that the victuals were very good. The soup was made from meat. Plates of carrots and turnips were handed round for admixture in the broth, thus giving us the opportunity of converting it into a *julienne* on a large scale. Then came the old original *cuisine bourgeoise, bouillon, bœuf*—fresh beef, boiled, in large stringy lumps, with a coronal of fat, like Doctor Sacheverell's curly wig. With mustard, oil, and pepper, this was not bad. I could have pronounced it true beef;

I could have praised the roast mutton that followed (a leg cut up in hunks and handed round), the salad, the haricots, the *compôte* of pears, and the Roquefort cheese, that concluded this plain, substantial, and, on the whole, cheap meal (for everybody was helped twice, and there was an indiscreet amount of bread consumed), if the people would but have spoken. But they were dumb to the last.

One solitary gleam of life (as connected with Mammon) there was, when the solemn lady came round after the *bouilli*, and collected our respective thirty-six sous in a hand-basket. The jingling did me good; but we soon relapsed into our old Shillibeer joggletrot. There was the clicking of the knives and forks, and the occasional smothered rattle of the plates; and the funeral-baked meats did furnish forth the table-d'hôte, and the only thing wanting to complete this gastronomic Golgotha was the statue of the Commendatore, from Seville, whispering across the table that he was the father of Donna Elvira, and did you know if Don Juan was there, because he had an appointment to sup with him.

The guests were no ghosts, though. Ghosts!—wolves, rather. I never saw such a set of trenchermen. I am certain that every man there present must have put under his waistcoat at least sixty-three sous' worth of solid food. The concern must be a loss. The Silent Tomb can't pay. Perhaps the proprietress is a widow with large revenues, who likes to spend it on these taciturn men. Perhaps it is a tontine, and the surviving members eat up the deceased. But it is certain—though I should like to renew my acquaintance with the beef—that I can never dine there again. It is not good to eat and say nothing. Even the pig grunts over the trough. Shall we be less sociable than the pig?

By the time we had finished dinner, and as I turned to give the waiter two sous (who, perceiving my intent, and being plainly a misanthrope, dropped his napkin, and fled into the next room), the table opposite to us had obtained its complement, and an exactly similar dinner was commencing thereat. Do they never

stop dining at the Silent Tomb? Is it always turn and turn about? Table full and table empty? Soup and bully, salad and roast? Will it ever be so till Death slips off his waiter's jacket for a shroud, and the beef shall give place to bones?

I dexterously gave Lobb the slip in the court-yard, and there was a coldness between us for some days. I plunged into the noisiest café I could find, where there was a crash of dominoes, a charivari of cups and saucers, violent disputes between Jules and Alphonse over sugar-and-water, and endless shriekings of and for waiters. I went to the Bouffes Parisiennes after that, and was quite delighted with the noisiness of the music and the absurdity of a pantomime; and I walked home singing the "Sieur de Framboisy" the whole way. But I had the nightmare before the morning.

As already stated, I have never been able to find the Rue Pictonpin since. I do not like to ask Lobb (though we have been reconciled, over kirschwasser), for certain reasons; and were it not that I know him to be a man of mortal mould, and an exemplary clerk in a banking-house, I should be tempted to believe that I had been spirited away to some cave of glamour, and that I had feasted in the Island of Saint Brandon, or spent the evening with Rip van Winkle.

But I was not disheartened. There was more beef, I knew, in Paris than had yet come out of it. I sought a great beef establishment in the narrow street that runs parallel to the east side of the Palais Royal—a time-honoured place of refection, by the sign of the "Bœuf à-la-mode." But I found beef no longer in fashion there. The waiter, who was far better dressed than I was, and who was the possessor of a watch-chain I can never hope to have the fellow of, looked down upon me, and thought me a poor-spirited creature—*un homme de rien*—because I would not have oysters and white wine before dinner. To ask for beef at the "Bœuf à-la-mode" was, I found, about the same as asking for a cup of coffee and a thin slice of bread and butter at the London Coffee House. Then I relapsed into the semi-English houses again—at the "John Bull," at the "True Roast Beef," or at

the "Renown of Roast Beef." But truth was a fiction and renown a sham. They gave me flaps of flesh that made me ill; they fed me with promises, and the performance was but gravy and sinew. I wandered in a desert of restaurants, and came upon no oasis of beef. I began to despond.

But hence, loathed Melancholy—away with thee Penserosa! See, the Allegro comes tripping soft with sweetest Lydian measure. Here is Bully Beef in the "Hall of Montesquieu!"

The illustrious author of the "Esprit des Lois" has given his name to, or has had it taken for, a vast saloon on the ground-floor of a street called the Cour des Fontaines, leading from the Palais Royal to the Galerie Véro-Dodat, where all old Paris men will remember so well M. Aubert's caricature shop, and its admiring crowd of loafers and pickpockets, staring at the inimitable pear-shaped portraits of Louis Philippe, and the countless Robert Macaires by Daumier. The Hall of Montesquieu has had its mutabilities. I remember it as a dancing saloon, well conducted, though the price of admittance was but fifty centimes. I have seen there a journeyman butcher, in his professional blue frock, dancing the Cellarius with a lady in puce velvet edged with fur, and a pink bonnet (she was, I declare, my washerwoman), with a gravity and decorum that showed that he knew his position and hers, and respected both. There used to be a waiter, too—or, rather, an overlooker, a sort of shop-walker—whose duty it was to pace the galleries moodily, and to cry out, "*Il faut consommer, messieurs!*" which signified that, if the visitors took seats, they must also take refreshment. With this unchanging, lugubrious speech, he always put me in mind of the Trappist crying, "Brothers, we must die!" He never said anything else; I don't believe he could; but I have an idea that he had been an idiot from his youth upwards, and that this one poll-parrot cry had been taught him, and that this was all he knew.

During the short-lived Republic* the hall was one of the fiercest of political clubs; and I have no doubt that my friend the butcher, repudiating the puerilities of Cellarius, spoke out his

* Of 1848.

mind stoutly on the necessity of proclaiming every master butcher an enemy of mankind, and of having the professional chopper used on the heads of the syndics. After the Republic had fallen through, the hall fell under the dominion of Terpsichore again; but its chorographic reputation was gone; and I have often seen the most frenzied mazurkas performed to no better audience than two *sergents de ville*, the *pompier* on duty, a dyspeptic American, and a solemn Englishman. After this there was a species of assault of arms in the hall, after the fashion of our Saville House.* I have not been told whether the Saladin feat, or "the severisation of the leg of mutton," took place; but there was fencing, and much wrestling, and the exercise of the *savate*, and a series of eccentric gymnastics with gloves, in which paralysis, St. Vitus's dance, the clog hornpipe, mesmeric passes, and the attitudes of Mr. Merryman, when he asks you how you are to-morrow, were oddly mingled, and which was called "Le Boxe Anglaise," and was believed by the spectators to be an exact reproduction of an English pugilistic encounter. I sincerely hope that our chivalrous neighbours may never become greater adepts in that brutal and debasing pastime.

Subsequently I lost sight of the Hall of Montesquieu for a long time. Hearing, even, that the "Docks de la Toilette" had been established in the Cour des Fontaines, I concluded that the hall had been pulled down, or converted perhaps into a dry dock for coats, perhaps into a basin for pantaloons. But I suddenly heard that it had been doing a great business in the beef line, throughout the whole time of the Exhibition of Industry;† that it had been dining its two and three thousand a day; and that it was now the "Etablissement du Bouillon-Bœuf," with subordinate establishments in the Rue Coquillière, the Rue de la Monnaie, and the Rue Beauregard.

I was off to the Cour des Fontaines immediately. There was a great photographic establishment somewhere above the hall, and effigies of scowling captains of dragoons, high-cheekboned

* In Leicester Square, on the site now occupied by the new theatre.

† In the year 1855.

ladies, and epileptic children, were hung on the entrance pillars in the usual puzzling manner; but there was no mistaking the gastronomic character which the place had assumed. A species of triumphal altar had been erected in a niche in front, and on it were piled huge joints of beef, legs and shoulders of mutton, geese, turkeys, fowls, sausages, apples, pears of preternatural size, and real venison, furred, leathern-nosed, and antlered. There was an oyster woman—a *belle écaillière*—before the door (the majority of *belles écaillières* are sixty years of age, and take snuff, even as the most numerous portion of the *vivandières* in the French army are wrinkled and ill-favoured). There was a great running in and out of waiters, a great ingress and egress of diners through swing-doors; the whole place was full of life and movement, and the promise of beef.

On entering (it was very like entering the Crystal Palace, so great was the throng, so large and lively the vista beyond), a courteous man gave me, with a bow, a *carte* of the viands obtainable, with the day of the month affixed, and blank spaces left for the quantity consumed. Then I passed on into the well-remembered hall; but, ah! how changed.

Prettily decorated, brilliantly lighted, crowded as of yore; but the orchestra and the throng of dancers were replaced by long lanes of marble tables, guiltless of tablecloths, covered with edibles, and at which four hundred persons were busily dining. In the centre were two immense erections, monuments covered with enamelled plates, and surmounted with pretty parterres of flowers. There were some encaustic portraits of waiters flying about with smoking dishes painted on these enamelled plates, giving the erections the appearance of vast mausoleums, erected to the memory of departed *garçons* and cooks who had fallen before too fierce fires and too hungry customers. But they were not cenotaphs, I discovered afterwards, but merely the cooking apparatus of the "Bouillon-Bœuf"; for round the base were ledges with the customary furnace holes and stewpans; and round this again, at a distance of a few feet, an oval counter piled with plates, where the waiters gave their orders and received their

dishes. In the space between circulated numerous cooks, male and female—the latter mostly very pretty—ah! roguish "Bouillon-Bœuf!"—all as busy as bees, stirring saucepans, dishing up vegetables, ladling out soup, and apportioning modicums of stew.

And there was a loud cry afloat of "*Versez*"; for many of the four hundred were taking their coffee after dinner, and waiters scudded, skated rather than walked, from table to table, and from huge coffee-pots frothed up the smoking substitute for mocha. Pour on and be merry; rattle knives and forks; chatter grisettes; hoarsely order "*biftek pour deux*," oh, waiter! gesticulate, discourse vehemently, oh, moustached men! querulously demand more soup, and drum impatiently on your plates with spoons, oh, little children in bibs, brought to dine at the "Bouillon-Bœuf" by your fond parents! ring out, ye echoes, till the glazed roof vibrates; for here is life, here health, cheerfulness, enjoyment, and be hanged to the Silent Tomb.

As there was rather too much life and merriment below, however, for a man who wished to philosophise upon four hundred fellow-creatures at their meals, I went upstairs into the gallery, which was partitioned off into boxes, where there was another kitchen, though on a smaller scale to the one below, and where there were perhaps a hundred and fifty diners more. Sitting down at one of the little marble tables I made the astonishing discovery that *eau de selz*—the French substitute for soda-water—was laid on to the premises like gas or New River water. An *eau de selz* pillar, neatly surmounted with a blue cut-glass knob, and an *eau de selz* double tap, came through the centre of each table; and on reference to the *carte* I found that for ten centimes—a penny—you might have as much of the *eau de selz* on tap as ever you liked—and blow yourself up with aërated water, if you were disposed so to do. Where was the reservoir? There, yonder, in one of the mausoleums. How was it made? What was it made of? Aye, there was the rub! I am no chemist; and lest from one of these metallic taps I should draw forth a solution of some noxious carbonate, sulphate, acetate, or phosphate, nauseous to the taste, and

inimical to the coats of the stomach, I refrained from the *eau de selz* at discretion, at once and for ever.

I must say this for the credit of the "Bouillon-Bœuf," that the celerity and agility of its waiters are beyond criticism and compare. I was no sooner seated than a light-hearted child of Gaul, with a bright eye and a chin-tuft, skipped up to me, brushed the table spotlessly clean (I did not mind his whisking the crumbs into my eyes), and blithely asked me what I would have. Soup he had already settled in his mind I should partake of, and producing a little pencil, attached by a silken cord to his waistcoat button, had set down a great black tick against the soup line in my *carte*. *Bouillon* was the word. *Bouilli* afterwards, of course. How much wine? half a bottle. Would I have a table-napkin? certainly. Bread? of course (I could have brought both myself). Four more ticks were jotted down on my *carte*, and the jocund youth went skipping off, twiddling his pencil like the dancing Faun his flute.

Perhaps he was one of the departed celebrities of "Montesquieu" when it was a dancing hall. But enough. Before I had well begun to speculate upon him he was back with my soup, my napkin, and my wine. After the discussion of the *potage*, and pending the arrival of the beef, I studied the *carte*, and profited much thereby. I learnt that soup cost twopence, *bouilli* twopence-halfpenny, roast meat and *ragoûts* threepence, vegetables twopence, bread a penny, a napkin a penny, *eau de selz* (as I have already said) a penny, wine fivepence the half-bottle, though half or even a quarter of that quantity was obtainable, and other articles of consumption in reasonable proportion. Not very Sardanapalian these items, certainly; and yet the company seemed to be not only composed of the pettier middle class, but of very many persons in what may be termed easy circumstances. There were no blouses, but a good number of plain female caps; but there were also a fair sprinkling of red ribbons at button-holes, and of bonnets with artificial flowers under them. Let me add that in the motley throng, order, good behaviour, and good humour reigned unvaryingly.

I think my dinner cost me elevenpence. I would rather not be questioned about the beef; but what can you expect for five sous? The place was very cheap, and very gay, and exceedingly curious for those who liked to look at men and women in their ways. The waiter's service was gratuitous—ostensibly so at least. You did not pay him the reckoning, but, descending to the *contrôle*, you presented your *carte* to an elegantly-dressed lady, who added up the items, softly but audibly, and told you the amount. This you paid. Then she stamped the document (oh, nation of stampers!) and delivered your *carte* again to a checktaker. All this light and space, all this life and merriment, all this beef and *bouilli*, all this selzer water at discretion, all this stamping and re-stamping, and all for elevenpence!

The next day—a red-letter day—my friend Bumposiosus, who is wealthy, said, "Come and breakfast." We breakfasted at that Alhambra-like *café*, at the corner of the Chaussée d'Antin, where millionnaires sup, where your cup is filled from silver coffee-pots worth a thousand francs each, and reckonings are paid in bank-notes. We had the enlivening wine of Thorins. We had eggs poached with asparagus tips, we had stewed kidneys, and we had a *chateaubriand*—a steak—ah, so tender! ah, so exquisitely done! It was delicious, it was unapproachable, it melted in the mouth; but I still adhere to my former assertion. There is no beef in Paris. I have not ten thousand a year; Bumposiosus does not ask me to breakfast every morning; and this was not eating beef—it was eating gold.

So I am yet open to continue my travels in search of beef, and expect to be on the move before long. I have been told that in Abyssinia they bring the ox to the door, and that you cut your steak off hot from the living animal, on the cut-and-come-again principle; but apart from the cruelty of the thing, a man cannot be too cautious in receiving statements about Abyssinia. Still, I yearn for beef; and if any gentleman hear of palatable ox-flesh down Otaheite way, I shall be happy to record my notions of a steak in the South Seas.

XII.

The Metamorphosed Pagoda.

"SEE Naples and then die," is the vain-glorious saying of the Neapolitans. The proverb has been considerably modified in our time. We say: See Naples —that God's own land of beauty and boundless fertility—that golden treasury of God-taught art; and, also seeing the filthy *lazzaroni*, the swarming *sbirri*, the Ergastolo, the scowling priests, the blood of St. Gennaro, and the million and one rascals who infest this fairest of cities, then see Naples, and die for shame and indignation.*

See Capri, too. There is a page of Roman history that needs no Niebuhr to dispute, no Lewis to examine. Its annals are late enough, accredited enough for us to see, in no shadowy guise, but palpably in the records of the past, the shrinking, trembling, gloomy, frivolous, yet ferocious tyrant, Tiberius, flying from the world to Capri—striving to shut out the demons his own bad passions had invoked from the choicest fruits and flowers of life, yet forgetting that he had at least a cavity where he had once a heart, and finding, too late, that vacuum-abhorring Nature had filled that cavity with devils. See Capri. The vestiges of the tyrant's palace are there still. There are the same stones that walled in sin and luxury, and that re-echoed to the carousing shouts of decadent Romans and to the cries of tortured slaves.

Not that I ever saw Capri, or Naples either. My Italian travels have been made hitherto with my feet on the fender and my eyes on a book.

* Written, *laus Deo*, before the Great Deliverance by Joseph Garibaldi.

But I know of another place which I choose to call Capri. Half a hundred miles from London, on the south-eastern coast of this kingdom, the booth-proprietors of Vanity Fair set up, some half a hundred years ago, a camp that has culminated into the gayest and pleasantest watering-place in the world. I myself have known it intimately full twenty years, and I caught myself, the other day, moralising upon the great palace of Chinese gingerbread that smirks upon—well, I won't be personal—the S. Upon how many thousand work-boxes, toy dioramas, sheets of note-paper, Tunbridge-ware tables, pin-cushions, have we seen the counterfeit presentment of this pompous platitude. Where were common sense, taste, fitness, decency, when the thing was done? If George the magnificent had said to Mr. Nash, prince of architects,—"Mr. Nash, will you oblige me by painting your face in parti-coloured streaks, and by walking on your hands into the middle of the S., where one of the lords of my royal bedchamber will provide you with four-and-twenty yards of scarlet riband, which you will be good enough to swallow;"—would Mr. Nash have done this thing, I wonder? Perhaps not. Yet the prince of architects has been guilty of buffooneries quite as gross, in building this pot-bellied palace—this minareted mushroom—this absurdity—this gilded dirt-pie—this congeries of bulbous excrescences, as gaudy and as expensive as Dutch tulips, and as useless.

We are accustomed to see and hear of kings doing extravagant things in the building line. It is their vocation. Cheops had his pyramid, Cleopatra her needle, Nero his golden house, James the First Nonsuch, and Kubla Khan—is it not written:

> "In Xanadu did Kubla Khan
> A stately pleasure dome decree,
> Where Alph, the sacred river, ran
> Through caverns measureless to man,
> Down to a sunless sea."

William Rufus designed to build a palace so huge that Westminster Hall, the first instalment thereof, was to be but one of the bed-rooms. Luckily, the state of the Civil List, and Sir Walter

Tyrrell's pointed behaviour to the king in the New Forest, nipped the grand design in the bud. Louis Quatorze had Versailles, the Abencerrages their Alhambra, the gloomy Philip his palatial gridiron, the Escurial; but we can forgive the first for the Grandes Eaux, the second for the Court of Lions, the third for the pictures of Titian and Velasquez. Frederick had his Sans-Souci, Leo his Loggie and Stanze, Napoleon his dream of a completed Louvre, not realised by him; even our third William took pleasure in enlarging Kensington, and making it square and Dutch and formal, like himself. But there was, it must be owned, something regal, and noble, and dignified in most of these architectural madnesses. When a king raves it should be in his robe and diadem, with gold for straw, and his sceptre for a bauble. But did ever a petty German princelet in his hunting-lodge—did ever a petty Indian nawab in his zenana—did ever a Dutch burgher in the linsey-woolsey frenzy for a *lusthaus*—did ever an impoverished Italian marquis, in the palazzo he began to build through pride, and left unfinished through bankruptcy—did ever a retired English hatter, going mad, as it is the traditional wont of hatters to do, and running up a brick folly, in three storeys, with a balcony and a belvedere—did ever any maniac in bricks and mortar perpetrate one tithe of the folly and extravagance that are manifested in every inch of this egregious potato-blight of a building on the S.?

I mind the time (a child) I used to gaze on the place with reverent curiosity. A king lived there then—a placid, white-headed sovereign, in a blue body-coat with brass buttons, and who had formerly been in the naval service. He played quiet rubbers at whist at night, while his royal partner and the ladies of the household worked in Berlin wool. It was rumoured that he could himself play on the flute prettily. He had a quiet, decorous Court. He used to drive out peaceably, without any unnecessary fuss, and was not unfrequently to be found on the beach, bargaining with little boys for models of ships, or with mariners for conchological specimens of appalling and weird appearance. He was popular, but suspected by the genteel

classes of a tendency to radicalism and economy, which caused him to be slightly depreciated in the higher circles. His name was William. But the great king who dwelt at Capri (and had made it), and who had been dead some years before I came to wot of the palace, was not William. A loftier sounding name had he. He was Georgius Optimus—George the great, the magnificent, the good—who had raised Capri from its mean state as a fishing village to the exalted rank of the queen of watering-places.

So I moralised at Capri. George had gone the way even that royal venison must go; William, he is dead too; and we have another sovereign who loves not the wicked gimcrack. She would have pulled the bauble down had not the stout burghers of Capri stept in alarmed, and bought it for fifty thousand pieces of gold. They have turned the place to all manner of wonderful and incongruous uses. They have concerts there, balls where ladies can dance without having first been presented at Court, and where lords in blue ribbons are never to be seen. They have exhibitions of pictures and photographs. They have had a circus there; yes, a circus where spotted horses dance, and M. Desarias' dogs and monkeys bark and chatter, and Mr. Merryman, with his painted face, tumbles in the sawdust! Pale men in spectacles come from Clapham to Capri to lecture on the Od Force. I have seen there, myself, exhibiting, two wretched black deformities of children—the Caribbean twins, or some such monstrosities—hawked round the room by a garrulous showman. I do not despair of seeing, some day, at the gate of the Pagoda a beefeater inviting the bystanders to walk in and see the Podasokus, or the "Whiffle Whaffle," or Oozly Bird, which, as is well known, digs a hole in the sand with his beak, and whistles through the nape of his neck.

The parochial authorities have offices in the Pagoda, where they give out quartern loaves and orders of relief, and pass destitute hop-pickers to Ireland. The sentry-boxes, in front of which gold-braided hussars used to pace, keeping watch and ward over the sovereign within, are boarded up. Irreverent boys have

chalked denunciations of the Pope, and libels on the police authorities, on the boards. They have quartered militiamen in the riding-school—that stately expanse where all the king's satin-skinned horses used to be exercised by all the king's scarlet-coated grooms. They have substituted a railing for the wall that used to veil the mysteries of Capri from the vulgar, and now every flyman on the S. can see the palace in its entirety. They have thrown open the gardens, and the rustic seats are now the resting-places of nursery-maids and valetudinarians, while the wheels of patent perambulators and the heels of the shoes of the plebeian children crunch the gravel which once resounded with the tread of kings and princes, marchionesses and ministers of state. Placards relative to the concerts and balls, the dogs and monkeys, and the twins, the Courier of St. Petersburg, and the next town-rate of twopence in the pound, flank the portals where yeomen of the guard have stood. They have dismantled the great entrance-gate, and it is as free of ingress to the pauper as all doors are to Death.

I remember when I used to regard that gate with awe and wonder, and watch the royal carriage, with its brilliant outriders, disappear through it, with bated breath, thinking of the ineffable splendour, the untold gorgeousness, the unimaginable luxuries, that must have their being behind those charmed doors. Now I pass through the gate, whistling. I smoke a cigar, contrary to rule, in the royal gardens. I pay sixpence to see a show in the place where the great kings dwelt: where beauty has languished, and voluptuousness has revelled, and pride has said to itself, "I can never die." I pay sixpence, and sit in my highlows, in the rooms where investitures have been held, knighthood conferred, treaties concocted, peace and war proclaimed, death-warrants signed. Twenty years ago, how many a millionaire's wife would have given her ears to be invited to the Pagoda! Now I invite myself, and my wife thinks the room but shabby.

I see breakers a-head that betoken the squall of a sermon. The subject is too enticing. Only this I must say: If any divine wishes to preach a sermon upon vanity and emptiness, and the

mutability of earthly things, let him make haste and come here, and take the Pagoda of Capri for a text.

Out on the S., facing the Pagoda, the idol-worshippers erected some years ago a statue of their idol. It was, I believe, originally cast in bronze; but either neglect or the saline quality of the atmosphere, or some yet more mysterious agent, has converted it into the mournfullest, rustiest, and most verdigrised old marine store you ever saw. This is Georgius—but ah! how changed from him! The ambrosial wig seems out of curl. The fine features are battered and worn away—the royal nose has especially suffered. The classic drapery hangs in dingy folds, like the garments of a lean and slippered pantaloon. *Fuit, fuit, fuit* is written everywhere. On dark winter's nights, when the sea moans fitfullest, and the wind howls among the Moorish chimney-pots of the Pagoda, and the rain whips the pedestal, I can imagine this statue animated by a ghost, and the ghost wringing its bronzed hands and crying, "Walla! Walla! Dogs and monkeys, Caribbean twins and clowns, in the house where I have waltzed with Jersey and gambled with Hertford; where I have entertained Polignac, and made Platoff tipsy; where I have suffered princesses to kiss my hand, and said to sheriffs, 'Arise, Sir John;' where I compounded my inestimable recipe for champagne-punch; mixed my world-famous Regent's snuff, and cut out my immortal white kid pantaloons!" Alas, poor ghost!

I meet occasionally at the Pagoda Gardens, seldom early or late, or in doubtful weather, but in the warmest, cheerfullest, most genial portion of the day, sundry elderly bucks, antediluvian dandies, senile old boys, whom I cannot help fancying to have been *habitués* of the Pagoda in the heyday of its glory. I meet them, too, on the cliff, and other places of resort; but the seedy purlieus of this palace out of elbows they especially haunt. Seldom do they walk together, or converse in groups. The Sphinx is solitary. Marius had no companion when he sat among the ruins of Carthage. Trotting, or toddling, or creeping, or hobbling, or slinking along, shall you see these damaged fops, these battered and bygone beaux. The fur-collar, the hat with raised brim, and

body curved slightly inward; the double eye-glass, the tightly-strapped trousers, and peaked high-heeled boots, telling of padded calves and bunions; the occasionally braided, always tightly-buttoned surtout, the never-failing umbrella, the high satin stock, the curly wig, or purple-dyed whiskers, the thousand crowsfeet on the face, the tired, parboiled eye, weeping because its owner is too vain to allow it the aid of spectacles; the mouth, full of evidence of what a capital profession dental surgery must be in Capri; the buckskin gloves, the handkerchief peeping from the breast-pocket, the oft-produced snuff-box, the cough, the scintillating suspicions of stays, and sciatica, and rheumatism, and paralysis—these are the most noteworthy exterior characteristics of the old beau types I meet in the Gardens.

They creep about in the sunshine, tottering over their old shadows, that seem like guides showing them the way to the grave. Now I meet them elbowed by the noisy, healthful, pleasure-seeking throngs by the sea; now they crouch in the corners of Mr. Thruppell's subscription reading-rooms, blinking over the newspapers—during which operation you may hear as many as forty distinct wheezes and coughs in the course of one forenoon. When it is cold they come abroad in cloaks and comforters, but are loath to lose an hour's sunshine. Nobody seems to invite them to dinner; you do not meet them in society, or at theatres or concerts. Even in church time on Sunday they crawl about the shiny streets. They never ride; they never venture on the beach, or bathe. When they are too old and feeble to walk, they subside into bath-chairs, and are dragged about the Esplanade to pass the time till Mr. Tressel's men have finished harnessing the black horses to the carriage, and Doctor Bolus is satisfied that he will get no more fees.

Who are they—these poor old boys? Alas! may they not have been the strong men who lived before Agamemnon came into babyhood? These fur-collared spectres lingering about the scenes of their former triumphs, like a dog about the grave of his master who is dead: these, O vain and forward youth, were once the gallant and the gay in that prouder alcove than Cliefden's—

they were the mimic statesmen who circled the merry king that built Capri. They are old and broken now; but the days have been when they have seen the Regent bow, and Fitzherbert smile, and D'Artois dance; when they have heard Sheridan laugh and Brummell jest. They have seen the tawdry rooms of the Pagoda all blazing with light, and splendour, and beauty—upon the orders of the men and the jewels of the women. They have seen Sardanapalus, Tiberius, Heliogabalus, Augustus—which you will—disporting himself at Capri. They know of the humours of the wild Prince and Poins. They have heard Captain Morris sing. They have known George Hanger. Are any such extant? you ask. I seem to think so when I meet these ancient dandified men—these crippled invalids from the campaign of vanity, where the only powder was hair-powder, and the only bullets fancy balls.

But Capri is no longer royal. The old dandies, the metamorphosed Pagoda, and the marine-store statue are the only relics left to point out that Capri was once the sojourn of royalty. Stay; there is a Chapel Royal, with the lion and the unicorn on red velvet within, but it is elbowed by a printing-office and stared out of countenance by a boot-shop. I for one (and I am one, I hope, of many thousands) do not regret the withdrawal of the royal patronage. I have an intense dislike to towns royal or semi-royal. Don't you know how people in Dublin bore you about "the Kyastle." In Windsor, however loyal a man may be, he is apt to be driven mad by the interminable recurrence of portraits, not only of the royal family—heaven bless them!—but of their dependants, hangers-on, and Teutonic relatives. The cobbler who vamps your boots, the chandlery shopkeeper who sells you a ha'porth of twine, is sure to be "purveyor to her Majesty and the Duchess of Kent," and you can scarcely take a chop in a coffee-room without a suspicion that the man in the next box, with the aristocratic whiskers and heavy gold chain, may be one of the royal footmen in disguise.

Versailles is one of the dreariest, dullest, dearest, most stuck-up places I know; though it has but the very shadow of a shade of royalty to dwell upon; Hampton Court is poor, purse-proud, and

A BUCK OF THE REGENCY.

P. 152.

conceited; Potsdam, I know, is slow and solemn; and Pimlico, I have heard, is proud.

The disfranchisement of Capri as a royal borough was the making of the place. Dire thoughts of ruin, bankruptcy, grass growing in the streets, or emigration to Dieppe, scared the inhabitants at first. But they were soon undeceived. The aristocracy continued their presence and patronage. They liked Capri, now royalty was gone, as a breathing-place. Perhaps, too, they liked a little being royalty themselves. The easy middle-classes came down, brought their wives and families with them, and took houses. By and by, a trunk-railway with numerous branches was started, and that wonderful personage Mr. Vox Populi came down, bag and baggage—Briarius, Argus, Hydra, welded into one. He brought his wife and children with him. Finally, schools multiplied, and doctors disseminated themselves and differed.

Schools! Capri swarms with them. The moral tenets inculcated there in bygone days were not precisely of a nature to render their introduction into copybooks, as texts, advisable; but time has purified the naughty place, and the town is now all over targets, at which the young idea is taught to shoot from the quiver of geography and the use of the globes—dancing, deportment, and moral culture. There are ladies' schools of the grimmest and most adult status; schools where the elder pupils are considerably bigger than the schoolmistress; which locate in tremendous stucco mansions in the vast squares at the east end of the town, and which are attended by music-masters with the fiercest of moustaches, and language-masters with long red beards and revolutionary hats, and dancing-masters who come in broughams, and masters of gymnastics, deportment, and calisthenics, who have been colonels, even generals, in the armies of foreign potentates.

To see these schools parade upon the Cliff is a grand sight, driving solemn London dandies and dashing lancer officers to desperation, and moving your humble servant to the commission of perhaps the only folly of which he has not as yet been guilty—

the composition of amatory verses in the *terza rima*. They are too pretty, they are too old to be at school; they ought to be Mrs. Somebodies, and living in a villa at Brompton. Strict discipline is observed in these grown-up schools; and I have heard that though Signor Papadaggi, the singing-master, and Mr. Stargays, the lecturer on astronomy, must know, necessarily, every pupil they attend by sight, the young ladies are instructed, whenever they meet their male instructors in public, by no means to acknowledge their salutations, but to turn their heads—seaward —immediately. This they do simultaneously, as soldiers turn their eyes right, to the great comfort and moral delectation of the schoolmistress, whose axiom it is, that men are of all living things the most to be avoided—which is sometimes also my opinion, Eugenius.

There are long-tailed ladies' schools, whose pupils average from sixteen to six, blocking up every pathway. You cannot pass down a by-street without hearing pianos industriously thrummed, to the detriment of Messrs. Meyerbeer, Thalberg, and Chopin, but to the ultimate benefit of the music-sellers and the pianoforte manufacturers. Brass plates abound; and that terrible epidemic, the collegiate system of female education, has declared itself virulently. Saline Parade College for Ladies, Prince Regency Square Ladies' Collegiate Institute, Hemp Town Academical Gymnasium for Young Ladies, conducted on Collegiate Principles—what sham next? I marvel what they are like—these ladies' colleges? Have they any affinity to the old young ladies' school?—the Misses Gimp, stiff and starched, the subdued English teacher, the snuffy French governess, the stocks, the backboard, the pinafores, the bread and butter, and the French mark? Or do the young ladies wear trencher caps and black gowns? Do they go to chapel in surplices, and fudge impositions, and have wine parties, and slang bargees, and cap proctors, and sport their oak? Are they rusticated if they are naughty? Are they ever plucked for their little-go? I should like to see a young lady plucked for her little-go.

As for the boys' schools, their name begins with an L and

ends with an N. Plenty of colleges of course; Reverend Doctors, M.A.'s, Graduates of the University, willing to take charge of, &c., Gentlemen who have devoted some years to the instruction of, &c., Clergymen most anxious to recommend an, &c. Capri is one huge trap hung with toasted cheese, and the poor little boy-mice are caught in it incessantly. It is good to see the little lads disporting themselves on the beach or at cricket in the fields, or filing along the Cliff, two and two, in every variety of cap and jacket, looking lovingly in at the pastrycooks. I should like to have boys at school at Capri, that I might come down on Saturday, and tip them, and give them tarts at Button's. Yet there are some boys I see in these scholastic processions who make me melancholy. Fatherless boys; boys with dark eyes whose parents are far away in burning India, and who have found but a hard step-school-father in Doctor Spanker. They have an ugly habit too, of sending sick boys to school at Capri—poor pale-faced children, who limp wearily on crutches after the healthful crew, or are drawn along in the wake of the young band in invalid-chairs, all muffled up in shawls and bandages, and gaze—ah! so wistfully—at the gambolling children and caracolling horses, and come here to be doctored and taught—to learn their lessons—and die.

The College of Physicians, the Royal College of Surgeons, the Company of Apothecaries, the Faculty of Homœopathists, the confraternity of Hydropathists, the Hygeian heretics, or College of Health-Arians, the great Professorial guild of Pill and Ointment vendors; nay, even the irregular Cossacks of medical science—the Bardolphs, Nyms, and Pistols of Field-Marshal Sangrado's army—rubbers, scrapers, counter-irritators pitch-plasterers, brandy-and-salt dosers, and similar free lances of physic—known sometimes, I believe, by the generic name of quacks—all these flourish at Capri, a very forest of green bay-trees, and wax exceeding rich. For there are so many really sick people who come to this Capri in search of health, that the convalescent natives, perhaps in deference to their visitors, perhaps by that contagious fancy which leads people to throw

themselves off the Monument, and write five-act tragedies, and start newspapers, straightway either imagine that they have something the matter with them, and call in the doctor forthwith; or feel that the mantle of Æsculapius has descended upon their shoulders, and, purchasing a second-hand mortar and half-a-dozen globular bottles, set up as doctors on their own account.

To be a doctor, or to be doctored, are the two conditions of existence at Capri. When a man hasn't a bad leg of his own, he bethinks him of his next-door neighbour, who has one of fifteen years' standing, and insists upon curing it. Come to Capri, and you shall at length know who are the purchasers of Professor Swalloway's, and Professor Methusaleh's, and Doctor Druggem's and Widow Wobble's pills; who are the persons that invest capital in old Doctor Isaac Lakadam's Tonic of Timbuctoo, and Messrs. Mullygrubbs' medicated ginger-beer, and Madame de Pompadour's farinaceous food; and how the patentees of those inestimable medicines acquire colossal fortunes. In the stream of equipages in the streets the doctor's sly brougham spots the gay procession like pips on an ivory domino. Call on your rich aunt; you are almost sure to meet the dentist coming in, or the chiropodist coming out, or Mr. Wallop the great gymnastic doctor's carriage (he makes five thousand a-year by kneading people's joints, and cannot spell) at the door.

In the remote slums of Capri (for even Capri has slums), in tarry little by-lanes and fishy hovels, where barricades of seines and nets hung out to dry impede the passage, and the little children toddle about in bucket-boots and sou'wester hats, you may discover, grizzling over saucepans, or mumping on patchwork counterpanes, preposterous old women in pea-jackets and Welsh wigs, always infirm, often bed-ridden—magging, obstinate, superstitious, ignorant crones—who yet possess wonderful reputations as doctoresses, and are the holders of dire medicaments; grim recipes, "as was took by his blessed Majesty for the innards," and warranted to work marvellous cures. They cannot read or write, these ancient ladies: they moan in their own sick-beds, and dun the parish surgeon for doctor's stuff; yet they cure all bodily

complaints of others. Solemn housekeepers come to Cod's Head Alley or Hard Roe Lane, sent by the Marchioness of Capri, to consult these old women. If they cannot cure, at least they have the consolation of knowing that they thwart the regular physician, and counteract the effect of his medicines, and render his guinea visit null and void. Do I call people simpletons for running after quacks here at Capri or throughout the mortal world? No—not I. How do we know—what do we know? Goody Fishbone's salted roe of a herring, beaten up in a glass of rhubarb and gin, and swallowed fasting, may do us good. A man believes in quacks as he believes in ghosts; and how many of the wisest of us have spectres at our bed's-foot every midnight in the year?

Lest quackery, however, left to itself, should quite cure—or kill—Capri out of hand, it is but justice to remember that it is the dwelling-place of very many learned and accomplished physicians and surgeons—men whose long lives have been spent not only in the ardent pursuit of knowledge and science, but also in doing good to their fellow-creatures—in healing not only hurts but hearts; and who glorify by their charity the profession which by their talents they adorn.

Ought I to say anything of the reverend profession in Capri? Shall I be impertinent in lightly touching on themes ecclesiastical? Would not, moreover, a paraphrase of that which I have said of the doctors serve also for the clergy? For there are doctors and doctors, and there are parsons and parsons. Orthodox ecclesiastics—good, pious, charitable, unostentatious men, doing acts of mercy by stealth; Christian priests of every denomination, labouring heartily in their vocation, and earning their reward. And there are also the irregular Cossack corps, the sellers of pious pills, and holy ointments, and polemical plasters—braying Boanerges, cushion-thumpers—men who jump, and howl, and rave, and throw their arms about, and pipe all hands to repentance as violently and hoarsely as boatswains.

When I hear the Reverend Mr. Tinklesimble, who is wonderfully eloquent, but a comb for whose hair and soap for whose face are decidedly (under correction) desiderata—when I hear Mr.

Tinklesimble lecture upon the Beast in the Pit, and the Seventh Vial, and the Crystal Sea, proving by word and gesture, plainly though involuntarily, that the study of the Apocalypse hath found him mad or left him so; when in twenty other streets and chapels I hear reverend lunatics gnashing in their padded rooms—I mean pulpits—I am content to pass them by: what would animadversion upon them have to do with Capri, though they dwell there? Are they not common to every nation and every creed, and to all humanity?

Ecclesiastical architecture is of much account in Capri. Tall steeples point upwards like the tall chimneys of Preston, telling of extensive factories of grace. Gothic and Corinthian, Saxon and Byzantine—of every style are these fanes. Yet do I seem to miss a church on a hill I loved twenty years syne: it was the parish church of Capri, when Capri was yet but in the Hundred of Herringbone, a poor fishing hamlet. The Old Church, the natives affectionately called it; that ancient, gray, shingled, moss-grown edifice, with its carved porch and lazy sun-dial. How many, many times when a boy I have played among the green graves, or sat and gazed in childish contemplation at the town beneath, and the blue sea rising straight up at the sky, as though to engulph it; or spelt over the inscription on the tomb of the brave sea-captain who took the fugitive Charles the Second over to France after the battle of Worcester, and of that famous old woman who fought in male attire at Blenheim, and Ramillies, and Malplaquet, all through the wars of Queen Anne, and who died when she was more than a hundred years of age, pensioned by the King of Capri.

But the clergy, the doctors, the schools, the aristocracy, all of the proudest features of Capri, culminate on her boulevards, the Cliff.

The stones of the Paris boulevards and my feet are brothers; I know the gardens of the palace at Laeken; I have walked Unter den Linden, and toiled up the Grand Rue of Pera. I have yet to lounge on the Toledo and the Quay Santa Lucia; to smoke a cigarette at the Puerta del Sol; to inhale the evening breeze on the Pincian Hill; to buy sweetmeats on the Ponte Vecchio at

Florence, or bargain for a yard of Venice gold chain on the Rialto at Venice.* Regent Street is familiar to me, likewise Ratcliffe Highway; yet I question if any public promenade the wide world through be as pleasant, gay, and picturesque as the Cliff at Capri. The footpath is so narrow, to begin with: the throng is so thick, the people so well dressed; they look so happy; there is so much youth; there are so many smiles. The very commerce is light-hearted and picturesque; jewellery, shells, fancy walking-canes, toys, curiosities, French kid gloves, bonnets and feathers, hot-house fruits and flowers, gay lithographs, gift-books, albums and Church Services bound in velvet and gold. None but the amenities of trade find stalls in this gay mart. The bagatelle is triumphant. *Vive la bagatelle!*

If you are unmarried, unhappy, poor, and have no friends, but are withal of a cheerful temperament, and unenvious of the prosperity of others, it is balm to your wounded spirit to walk here on a breezy morning or sunny autumn evening; gliding silently but observantly among the motley, careless crowd. Hundreds of little histories you may weave for yourself, and not one tragic one among them. Here are sweethearts, young couples on their wedding tour, bluff papas of stockbroking tendencies, who have come express from Capel Court to take their young families out walking; stout mammas in gorgeous silks and bonnets, like a page out of Mr. Audubon's natural history book. Here are delicious young ladies blushing to find from the admiring eyes of passers-by how pretty they are; here are wonderful foreigners, whose moustaches, braiding, and mosaic jewellery, would do honour to Verrey's or the Café Cardinal, and who, disgusted at the turpitude of the Austrian Government, the tyranny of the French Emperor, and the tergiversation of the King of Prussia, have come to Capri as to another Patmos; and are not too proud to teach German verbs, and "Do, re, mi, fa, sol," for a livelihood. If you have a becoming British reverence for the Peerage of your country, and for its governing classes, who have done you so much good, you will feel a thrill of pride and gratification when your garments are

* It may be mentioned that all of these have been since accomplished.

positively brushed on the Cliff by the sweeping silken robes of peeresses in their own right, and the coat-lappets of hereditary legislators.

You meet everybody on the Cliff at Capri. The peers and the sweet peeresses, and the aldermanesses, and the Board of Works; Her Majesty's ministers in plaid shooting jackets, bishops' wives in green "uglies," gouty old generals in wide-awake hats, archdeacons in waterproof coats, Israelitish millionaires (very strong is the wealthy Caucasian element at Capri: it dwelleth at Hemp Town in five-storeyed mansions; it goeth to town in the morning and returneth to dinner by express; grand dinner parties giveth it to the tribe of Benjamin, and of Moses, and of Levi; handsome daughters with ringed fingers hath it, and, curiously, it seems to be continually buying fruit in the market), little city gents, honest florid tradesmen and their families, young dandies, used-up men, fast men, slow men; fellows of their colleges, from Cambridge, in spectacles; blooming, busy lawyers, with great shirt-frills and watch-chains; leaders of circuit, in very shabby trousers, with wig-powder yet on their coat-collars, and moving the sea for a rule to show cause why they should not force a transient flush of health into their pallid, tired countenances.

Have I forgotton—no, but I have as yet omitted to mention—two of the strongest classes, and the most constant in their attendance on the Cliff. I allude to the canine pets and the round hats. Every variety of lapdog may you see, O philosopher, in this pretty paradise of puppies. The fat, plethoric, wheezy, long-eared, lolling-tongued, door-mat of a dog, with a pink ribbon round his apoplectic neck, and legs so short that their existence is almost imperceptible. This animal as surely belongs to the Dowager Lady Booterstown, in the peerage of Ireland, as yonder yelping rat-like terrier—or, perhaps, more like a rat that has stolen and caparisoned himself in a porcupine's panoply—belongs to the austere old gentleman with the Nonconformist countenance, who clutches his umbrella as though he were going to beat somebody with it: to this dog enters your silky Blenheim spaniel, a lazy little cub, but victorious often in his passive

obstinacy, turning over on his back, sticking out his short legs, and, with his head on one side, humorously defying all the efforts of strenuous foot-page and despairing young lady, although armed with the poke-inflicting parasol, to make him move on.

Then comes mincing along daintily, as though he had patent leather boots on, Monsieur Caniche—your French poodle, curled, shaven, trimmed, pink-nosed, and redolent of Naples soap. And after him, ambling, but shivering piteously in his plaid paletôt, Signor Lungoshanko, the Italian greyhound. And, sometimes—the sight is not often seen by human eyes, but is manifest occasionally—comes there sweeping along the Cliff some dowager of ancient days, bearing in her arms the Lost Book of Livy, the *ultimus Romanorum*, the Vinegar Bible, the Samothracian Onagra, the blue diamond, the black swan, the pearl beyond price of dog-hood—the Dutch Pug. You see his coffee-coloured coat, his moist, short, black nose, his snarling little molars for a moment, and tremble. He departs like a vision, and you ask the wailing ocean, where you may see such another dog alive.*

I should like to linger a great while longer on the Cliff at Capri, but my time is come, and to other penal servitude I must betake myself. You have heard nothing as yet of the famous pier at Capri, of the pretty horsewomen, of the bold riding-masters, of the stalwart bathing-women, of the doughty Capri tradesmen. All these things you shall hear some day, if you are inclined and time will serve; likewise of the first mayor of Capri, and how all the town councillors wanted to be aldermen, and how all the aldermen wanted to be mayor, and failing each and every of them in the attainment of that high office, moved votes of censure upon everybody, and played the very deuce with the town of the Metamorphosed Pagoda.

* Written before the breed was revived in this country.

XIII.

The Land of Nod:
A Kingdom of Reconciled Impossibilities.

HERE is a kingdom whose boundaries are within the reach of every man's hand, on whose frontiers no heavier entrance-tribute or import-duty is exacted save that comprised in the payment of two-score inflexions of the eyelids—or forty winks; a kingdom into which the majority of humanity travel at least once in every twenty-four hours; though the exact time—the precise moment—at which that voyage is commenced is not, and never has been, known to any man alive. Whether we are transported by some invisible agency—on the wings of spirits or in the arms of genii—whether we go to the kingdom or the kingdom comes to us, we cannot tell. Why or how or when we came there we know not; yet, almost invariably, when the tribute of the forty winks has been duly paid, we find ourselves wandering in the Land of Nod—the Kingdom of Reconciled Impossibilities.

Locomotion in this kingdom is astonishingly rapid: we run without moving and fly without wings. Time and space are counted zeros; centuries are skipped at a bound; continents and oceans are traversed without an effort. We are here, there, and everywhere. Grey-headed men, we are little boys at school, breaking windows and dreading the vindictive cane. Married and settled, we are struggling through the quickset hedges of our first love. Crippled, we race and leap; blind, we see. Unlearned, we discourse in strange tongues and decipher the most intricate of hieroglyphics. Unmusical, we play the

fiddle like Paganini. We pluck fruit from every branch of the tree of knowledge; the keys of every science hang in a careless bunch at our girdle; we are amenable to no laws; money is of no account; Jack is as good as his master; introductions are not required for entrance into polite society; the most glaring impossibilities are incessantly admitted, taken for granted, and reconciled. Whence the name of this kingdom.

Much more wondrous and full of marvels is it than the famed land of Cockaigne, than the country of Prester John, than the ground of Tom Tidler (whose occupation is now gone in consequence of the discovery of rival grounds in California and Australia), than Raleigh's Dorado, than the Arcadia of Strephon and Corydon, Celia and Sacharissa; than the fearful country where there are men

> "whose heads
> Do grow beneath their shoulders,"

than even the mirabolant land that Jack saw when he had gotten to the top of the beanstalk. The only territorial kingdom that I can compare it to is one—and even the duration of *that* one is fleeting and evanescent, appearing only for a season, like specks upon the sun or the floating islands in Windermere—visible and to be travelled in from the end of December to the end of the following February, called the Kingdom of Pantomime. This kingdom, which, at other seasons of the year, is almost as rigorously barred and closed against strangers as China or Japan or the Stock Exchange, offers many points of resemblance to the Kingdom of Reconciled Impossibilities.

There is a voyager therein, one Clown, who with Pantaloon, his friend and dupe and scapegoat, dances about the streets, insults and beats respectable shopkeepers, swindles and robs ready-furnished lodgings, leers at virtuous matrons, commits burglaries and larcenies in the broad day (or lamp) light, and perpetrates child-murders by the dozen, yet goes "unwhipp'd of justice:" nay, he and his confederate are rewarded at last by an ovation of fireworks and revolving stars; as are also Harlequin, a prancing scapegrace in a spangled jerkin and hose, and a dancing girl

they call Columbine; who together play such fantastic tricks before the footlights as make the gallery roar—such tricks as would be tolerated nowhere but in a Kingdom of Impossibilities. For in all other kingdoms, theft of fish or sausage—be it even the smallest gudgeon or an infinitesimal saveloy—is three months' incarceration at least, and robbery in a dwelling-house is felony; and to force a respectable white-bearded man with a crutch stick and an impediment in his speech to cast involuntary somersaults, and to make him sit down oftener on a hard surface than he wishes, is an assault punishable by fine and imprisonment; while the cutting up, mutilating, smothering, or thrusting into a letter-box of a baby is Murder.

In all other kindoms, likewise, as we are well aware, vice is always vanquished and virtue rewarded—ultimately; but in the Kingdom of Reconciled Impossibilities, as well as in that of Pantomime, nothing of the kind takes place. In this former one, innocent, we are frequently condemned to death, or to excruciating tortures. Masters, we are slaves; wronged and oppressed, we are always in the wrong and the oppressors. Though in the every-day kingdom we are perhaps wealthy, at least in easy circumstances, we are in the Realms of Impossibility perpetually in difficulties. Moments of inexpressible anguish we pass, from the want of some particular object or the non-remembrance of some particular word; though what the object or the word may be, we never have and never had the remotest idea. Spectres of duties omitted, ghosts of offences committed, sit at banquets with us; and, under circumstances of the greatest apparent gaiety and joviality, we are almost always in sore perturbation of mind and vexation of spirit.

The kingdom, indeed, is full of tribulations, impossible yet poignant. Frequently, when we attempt to sing, our voice dies away in an articulate murmur or a guttural gasp. If we strive to run, our legs fail under us; if we nerve our arm to strike, some malicious influence paralyses our muscles, and the gladiator's fist falls as lightly as a feather; yet, powerless as we are, and unable to beat the knave who has wronged us, we are ourselves

continually getting punched on the head, beaten with staves, gashed with swords and knives. Curiously, though much blood flows, and we raise hideous lamentations, we do not suffer much from these hurts. Frequently we are killed—shot dead—decapitated; yet we walk and talk shortly afterwards, as Saint Denis is reported to have done.

Innumerable as the sands of the sea are the disappointments we have to endure in the Kingdom of Impossibilities. Get up as early as we may, we are sure to miss the train; the steamboat always sails without us; if we have a cheque to get cashed, the iron-ribbed shutters of the bank are always up when our cab drives to the door, and somebody near us always says, without being asked, "Stopped payment!" All boats, carriages, beasts of burden, and other vehicles and animals, behave in a similar tantalising and disappointing manner; tall horses that we drive or ride change unaccountably into little dogs, boats split in the middle, coaches rock up and down like ships. We walk for miles without advancin g a step, we write for hours without getting to the end of a page, we are continually beginning and never finishing, trying and never achieving, searching and never finding, knocking and never being admitted.

The Kingdom of Impossibilities must be the home of Ixion, and the Danaïdes, and Sisyphus, and peculiarly of Tantalus. The number of tubs we are constantly filling, and which are never full, and the quantities of stones which, as soon as we have rolled them to the top of a hill, roll down again, are sufficiently astonishing; but it is in a tantalising point of view that the kingdom is chiefly remarkable. We are for ever bidden to rich banquets—not Barmecide feasts, for the smoking viands and generous wines are palpable to sight and touch. But, no sooner are our legs comfortably under the mahogany, than a something far more teazing and vexatious than the ebony wand of Sancho's physician sends the meats away untasted, the wines unquaffed—changes the *venue* to a kingdom of realities.

Dear me! When I think of the innumerable gratuitous dinners I have sat down to in the Land of Impossibilities, of

the countless eleemosynary spreads to which, with never a dime in my pocket, I have been made welcome—of the real turtle, truffled turkeys, Strasbourg pies, and odoriferous pine-apples that have tempted my appetite—of the unhandsome manner in which I have been denied the enjoyment of the first spoonful of soup, and of the rude and cavalier process by which I have been suddenly transported to another kingdom where I am usually expected to pay for my dinner—when I think of these things, I could weep.

Sometimes, though rarely, the rulers of the Impossible Kingdom permit you to drink—provided always that you have tumbled (which is always your mode of entrance) into their domains in a desperately parched and thirsty condition. Cold water is the general beverage provided, and you are liberally allowed to drink without cessation—to empty water-jugs, pitchers, decanters, buckets, if you choose. I have known men who have sucked a pump for days, nay, who have lapped gigantic quantities of the Falls of Niagara; but the ruler of the Impossible Kingdom has mingled one cruel and malicious condition with his largesse. You may drink as much as you like, but you must never quench your thirst, and you must always wake—tumble out of the kingdom, I mean—thirstier than you were before.

Travelling in this strange country is mostly accomplished in the night season—"in thoughts from the visions of the night, when deep sleep falleth upon men." It is when the Kingdom of Life is hushed and quiescent, when the streets are silent, and there are none abroad but the watchers and the houseless, that the Kingdom of Impossibilities wakes up in full noise, and bustle, and activity. Yet betimes we are favoured with a passport for this kingdom in the broad day season, in the fierce summer heat, when we retire to cool rooms, there to pay the tribute of forty winks to the Monarch of the Impossible Kingdom; when, as we travel, we can half discern the green summer leaves waving through our translucent eyelids,—can hear the murmuring of fountains, and the singing of birds, in the kingdom we have come from. Very pleasant are these day voyages, especially

when we can drowsily hear the laughter of children playing on a lawn outside.

The Kingdom of Reconciled Impossibilities is a land of unfulfilled promises, of broken engagements, of trees for ever blossoming but never bearing fruit, of jumbles of commencements with never a termination among them, of prefaces without a finis, of dramas never played out. The unities are not observed in this kingdom. There are a great many prologues, but no epilogues. It is all as it should not and cannot be. It snows in July, and the dog-days are in January. Men sneeze with their feet and see with their thumbs, like Gargantua. The literature of the country consists of tales told by idiots, full of sound and fury, signifying nothing. The houses are all built without foundations; they are baseless fabrics, which, vanishing, leave not a wreck behind. Everything in the kingdom is impossible.

Impossible, yet reconciled. In no other land, certainly, are we so convinced of the truth of the axiom that "whatever is is right." Against our knowledge, feelings, experience, and convictions, against all evidence, oral or ocular, against truth, justice, reason, or possibility, we smilingly confess that black is white, that clouds are whales, that the moon is cheese. We know our brother to be our brother, yet without difficulty or reluctance we admit him to be Captain Cook. With a full knowledge that what we are doing can't be, we are pleasingly convinced that it can be, and that it is, and is right. So we violate all the laws of morality, and decency, and international justice, honesty, and courtesy, with a comfortable self-consciousness that it is "all right," and that we are wronging no one.

Quakers have been known, in the Kingdom of Impossibilities, to lie in wait for men and murder them; nay, to have hidden the bodies in corn bins and chemists' bottles. Moral men have eloped with ballet-dancers. Bishops have found themselves at the Cider Cellars. Judges of the Ecclesiastical Court create disturbances at the Casino, and have wrenched off knockers, in company with jovial proctors and fast old sur-

rogates, about town. There was a cathedral verger once, in the Kingdom of Impossibilities, who refused a fee; there was an Irish Member without a grievance; there was a Chancery suit decided to the satisfaction of all parties.

Good men not only become rascals, but rascals turn honest men in this astonishing country. Captain MacSwindle paid me, only last night, the five pounds he has owed me for fifteen years. I saw the unjust steward render up a faultless account. All is not vexatious and disappointing in the Impossible Kingdom. If it be a kingdom of unfulfilled promises, it is one of accomplished wishes. Sorely pressed for cash in this possible kingdom, no sooner are we in the impossible one than the exact sum we wished for chinks in golden sovereigns, rustles in crisp notes, mellifluously whispers in soft-paper cheques before our eyes, within our gladsome pockets, or our rejoicing fingers. We shall be able to meet the little bill; streets are no longer stopped up; the tailor shall cringe again; Caroline shall have the velvet mantle trimmed with sable. Hurrah! But alas! the money of the kingdom that never can be, and yet always is and will be, is as treacherous and deceitful as a will-of-the-wisp, or an eastern mirage; no sooner do we possess it than we have it not. We wake, and the shining sovereigns and the rustling notes have turned into dry leaves, like the money paid by the magician in the Arabian Nights.

If the kingdom (to expatiate further on its advantageous features) be one of tribulations and disappointments, it is also one of great and extended privileges. We are privileged to walk about unwashed, unshaven, and undressed, to clap kings upon the back, to salute princesses if we list, to ride blood horses, to fly higher than the skylark, to visit foreign lands without a Foreign Office passport, the reference of a banking firm, or the necessity of being personally known to the Foreign Secretary. We have the privilege of being a great many people and in a great many places at one and the same time. We have the privilege of living our lives over again, of undoing the wrongs we have done, of re-establishing our old companionship with the dead,

and knowing their worth much better than we did before we lost them.

Yes, pre-eminent and radiant stands one privilege, to the enjoyment of which every traveller in the land of Reconciled Impossibilities is entitled. He is privileged to behold the Dead Alive. The King of Terrors has no power in the domains of the Impossible. The dead move and speak and laugh, as they were wont to speak and move and laugh in the old days when they were alive, and when we loved them. They have been dead—of course—we know it and they say so—but they are alive now; and, thanks to the irresistible logic of the Impossible Kingdom, we slightly question how. These visitors have no grim tales to tell, no secrets of their prison-house to reveal. Here, joyful and mirthful as ever, are the old familiar faces; the life-blood courses warmly through the old friendly hands; dead babies crow and battle valorously in nurses' arms; dead sweethearts smile and blush; dead aunts scold; dead schoolmasters awe; dead boon companions crack the old jokes, sing the old songs, tell the old stories, till WE WAKE into the kingdom of the Possible; and ah me! the eye turns to a vacant chair, a faded miniature, a lock of soft hair in crumpled tissue paper, a broken toy; while the mind's vision recurs to a green mound, and a half effaced stone.

In the regions of the Impossible there is a population separate, apart, peculiar; possible nowhere but in a land of impossibilities. Monstrous phantasms in semi-human shape, horrible creations, deformed giants, dwarfs with the heads of beasts; shapeless phantoms, hideous life such as the Ancient Mariner saw on the rotting deep. Such things pursue us through these regions with grinning fangs and poisonous breath; kneel on our chests; wind their sharp talons in our hair; gnaw at our throats with horrid yells. And, apart from the everyday scenes of everyday life brought to the *reductio ad absurdum* in the Kingdom of Impossibilities, we tarry betimes in chambers of horrors, in howling deserts, in icy taverns, in lakes of fire, in pits of unutterable darkness. Miserable men are they who are frequent travellers

through these districts of the Impossible Kingdom! They may say with the guilty Thane—

> "Better be with the dead,
> Whom we to gain our place have sent to peace,
> Than on the torture of the mind to lie
> In restless ecstacy."

If you would leave such countries unexplored, lead virtuous lives, take abundant exercise, be temperate (in the true sense of the word: not choosing in what, but in everything), and take no man's wrong to bed with thee—no, not for one single night.

XIV.

Twenty Miles.

He who travels frequently, sometimes on foot, always humbly, seldom unobservantly, has other and better opportunities, it appears to me, of forming a just notion of the countries he passes through than Mr. Assistant-Commissioner MacCollum, of the Inner Temple, Barrister-at-Law, who scours through the land in the first class *coupé* of an express train; holds his commission in the best sitting room of the best hotel; and, after drawing his three or five guineas a day, scours back again, serves up an elaborate report to my Lords, and is in due course of time rewarded for his arduous services by being made Puisne Judge of Barataria, or Lieutenant-Governor of the Larboard Islands.

It is astonishing how little a man may see while travelling, if he will only take the trouble to shut the eyes of his mind. The Sir Charles Coldstreams who go up to the top of Vesuvius and see nothing in it; who in their ideas of Grand Cairo do not condescend to comprise the pyramids, but confine themselves to complaints of the bugs and fleas at Shepheard's hotel; who have no recollections of Venice, save that there was no pale ale to be got there—are not so uncommon a class as you may imagine. It is not always necessary for a man to be "used-up" to visit a country, and see nothing in it; nay, that noble lord is not quite a *rara avis*, who, having just returned from Greece, and being asked at a dinner party "what he thought of Athens?" turned to the valet, standing behind his chair, and calmly said, "John, what did I think of Athens?"

It was once the lot of your humble servant to travel twenty miles by railway, and in the depth of winter, in company with one

single traveller. The scenery through which we were passing was among the most beautiful in the world; and in its wintry garb was so exquisitely fair, that it might have moved even the taciturn Mr. Short, in Captain Marryat's "Snarley-yow," to grow eloquent upon it. But your servant's companion, a hard-featured man in a railway rug, was a dumb dog, and made no sign. In vain did your servant try him upon almost every imaginable subject of conversation—the weather, the country, politics, the speed of the train, the ambiguities of Bradshaw, the electric telegraph, the number of stations, and the prevalence of influenza. He was "mum."

He could scarcely be silently observing and commenting upon the works of Nature in the landscape without, or of art in your servant's dress within, for he never looked out of the window, and kept his eyes (staringly wide awake they were) upon one particular check of his railway rug. He could scarcely have been a philosopher, looking, as he did, like a tub without a Diogenes in it; and, unless he was speculating upon the development of textile fabrics, or counting the number of pulsations of the engine to himself—(I did once travel from Liverpool to London, two hundred and twenty miles, with a gentleman whose sole occupation was in checking off the number of telegraph posts, but who, getting confused between them and a white paling, lost count at Tring, in Hertfordshire, and relapsed into absolute silence)—his mind must have been a blank. At last, on a stoppage at some station, I remarked, desperately scraping the gelid rime from the carriage window, that "it froze:" whereupon, speaking for the first and last time, he responded solemnly, "Hard;" immediately afterwards drew from underneath the seat a black cow-skin travelling-bag, as hard, cold, and silent as himself, and slid out of the carriage. Some angular female drapery, surmounted by the ugliest bonnet that ever existed, was waiting for him on the platform; and my hard friend went on his way, and I saw him no more. I would rather not dine with him and the drapery next Christmas day.

Yet there is much virtue in twenty miles. Along the dreariest railway, up to the loneliest turnpike road, across the darkest, barrenest, rainiest sea, there are to the observant twenty score of

lessons in every mile of the twenty. To bring this enjoyment to every door, I would have all travellers taught to draw. I would not insist that they should become proficients in Poonah painting, or that they should attend Professor Partridge's lectures upon anatomy: I would not make it a *sine quâ non* that they should visit Rome, and copy all the frescoes in the Loggie and Stanze of the Vatican; but some rudimentary education in design and colour I would cause to be given to every man, woman, and child (able and willing to learn) who intends to travel twenty miles.

He who can draw, be it ever so badly, has a dozen extra preference shares in every landscape—shares that are perpetually paying golden dividends. He can not only see the fields and the mountains, the rivers and the brooks, but he can eat and drink them. The flowers are a continual feast: and when the rain is on them, and after that the sun, they may be washed down with richest wines, hippocras, hydromel, acqua d'oro, what you will. Every painter is, to a certain extent, a poet; and I would have every poet taught to paint. Charles Lamb asked, "Why we should not say grace, and ask a blessing before going out for a walk, as before sitting down to dinner?" Why should we not? The green meat of the meadows is as succulent a banquet to the mind, as ever the accloyed Lucullus stretched himself upon his couch to devour.

To the artistic eye there are inexhaustible pleasures to be found in the meanest objects. There are rich studies of colour in a brick wall; of form in every hedge and stunted pollard, of light and shade in every heap of stones on the macadamised road; of more than Pre-Raphaelite stippling and finish in every tuft of herbage and wild flowers. The shadow cast by a pig-stye upon a road, by an omnibus driver's reins on his horses' backs; the picturesque form of a donkey cart; the rags of a travelling tinker; the drapery folds in a petticoat hung out to dry on the clothes-line in the back-yard; the rugged angularities of the lumps of coal in the grate; the sharp lights upon the decanter on the table at home; all these are fruitful themes for musing and speculative pleasure. The fisherman who can draw has ten times more enjoyment in his meditative pursuit than the inartistic angler. An acquaintance

with art takes roods, perches, furlongs from the journey; for however hard the ground may be, however dreary the tract of country through which we journey, though our twenty miles may lie in the whole distance between two dead walls, have we not always that giant scrap-book, the sky, above us?—the sky with its clouds that sometimes are dragonish; with its vapours sometimes

> "Like a bear or lion,
> A tower'd citadel or a pendant rock,
> A forkèd mountain or blue promontory
> With trees upon't that nod unto the world,
> And mock our eyes with air,"

—the sky with all its glorious varieties of colour, its rainy fringes, its changing forms and aspects? I would not have a man look upon the heavens in a purely paint-pot spirit. I would not have him consider every sky as merely so much Naples yellow, crimson lake, and cobalt blue, with flake-white clouds spattered over it by a dexterous movement of the palette-knife; but I would have him bring an artist's eye and an artist's mind to the heavens above. So shall his twenty miles be one glorious National Gallery of art, and every square plot of garden-ground a Salon Carré, and every group of peasant children a Glyptothek.

There are many many twenty miles that have left green memories to me, and that have built themselves obelisks surmounted by *immortelles* in the cemetery of my soul. Twenty miles through the fat green flats of Belgium, enlivened by the horn of the railway guard, the sour beer, the lowly pipe, the totally incomprehensible, but no less humorous, Low Dutch jokes of Flemish dames in lace caps and huge gold earrings, and bloused farmers, and greasy curés. Twenty miles through that heavenly garden, that delicious lake country of England, in the purple shadow of the great crags and fells. Twenty miles along the dusty roads of Picardy with the lumbering diligence, the loquacious *conducteur*, the swift-scudding beggars, the long, low stone cottages, the peasantry in red night-caps and *sabots*, singeing pigs in the wide unhedged fields. Twenty miles along the trim English Queen's highway; on the box-seat of the Highflier coach, with the driver who knew

so much about every gentleman's seat we passed, and had such prodigious stories to tell about horses present and past; with the comfortable prospect of the snug hotel and the comfortable dinner at our journey's end. Twenty miles through the Kentish hop-gardens and orchards radiant with their spring-snow of blossoms. Twenty miles through the grim black country round Wolverhampton, with its red furnaces glaring out from the darkness like angry eyes.

Twenty miles in a certain omnibus hired for the day, in which there was much shouting, much laughing, much cracking of jokes, and munching of apples; in which there were twenty happy schoolboys going twenty miles to see the grand royal Castle of Windsor, and play cricket afterwards in the royal park; in which there was a schoolmaster so smiling, so urbane, so full of merry saws and humorous instances, that his scholars quite forgot he had a cane at home; in which there was a bland usher, who had brought a white neckcloth and a pocket Horace with him for the sake of appearances, but who evidently longed to cut off the tails of his black coat, and be a boy immediately; in which there was one young gentleman who thought the twenty miles the happiest and most glorious he had ever journeyed, and began to write in his mind volume the first of a romance, strictly historical, of which he was the hero, Windsor Castle the scene, and all Miss Strickland's Queens of England the heroines.

Yes; and the twenty miles in that barouche of glory, drawn by four gray horses, with pink postboys, which dashed round Kennington Common about eleven in the forenoon on a certain Wednesday in May; the barouche that stopped so long at Cheam Gate, and had a hamper strapped behind it containing something else besides split peas and water; which coming home had so many satiric spirits and Churchills hitherto unknown to fame in it, and was so merry a barouche, so witty a barouche, not to say so inebriated a barouche. Ah me! the miles and the minutes have glided away together.

There dwells upon my mind a twenty miles' journey that I once performed on foot—the dullest, most uninteresting, most unevent-

ful twenty miles that ever pedestrian accomplished. It was a stupid walk indeed. There was literally "nothing in it;" so it is precisely for that reason (to beat out a crotchet I have) that I feel inclined to write a brief chronicle of the twenty miles I walked along the high road from Lancaster to Preston.

When was it? Yesterday, last week, a dozen years ago? Never mind. For my purpose, let it be Now; put on your sparrow-bills; gird up your loins with the blue bird's-eye handkerchief dear to pedestrians, and walk twenty miles with me.

It is a very threatening summer's morning. Not threatening rain or thunder; the glass and the experience of the last ten days laugh *that* idea to scorn. But the morning threatens nevertheless. It threatens a blazing hot day. General Phœbus has donned his vividest scarlet coat, his brightest golden epaulettes (epaulettes were worn when I walked twenty miles), his sheeniest sword, his hat with the red and white cocks' feathers. He is determined upon a field-day, and serves out redhot shot to his bombardiers.

I leave the gray old legendary town of Lancaster, with its mighty castle, its crumbling church, its steep, quaint streets. I leave the tranquil valley of the Lune; the one timber-laden schooner, and row of dismantled warehouses which now represent the once considerable maritime trade of Lancaster (oh, city of the Mersey, erst the haunt of the long-legged Liver, you have much to answer for); I leave the rippling waters of Morecambe Bay, with its little pebbly watering-place of Poulton-le-Sands. I leave the blue shade of the mountains of Westmoreland and Cumberland; the memories of Peter Bell and his solitary donkey and the white doe of Rylstone; the thousand beautiful spots in the loved district, sunlighted by the memories of learned Southey, and tuneful Wordsworth, and strong John Wilson, and gentle, docile, erring Hartley Coleridge (there is not a cottager from Lancaster to Kendal, from Kendal to Windermere, but has stories to tell about "puir Hartley" affectionately recalling his simple face and ways); I leave all these to walk twenty miles to the town of

spindles and smoke, bricks and cotton-bales. I can give but a woman's reason for this perverse walk. I *will* walk it.

There is a place called Scotforth, about two miles out, where I begin to fry. There is a place called Catterham (I think) two miles further, where I begin to broil. Then I begin to feel myself on fire. There is a place where there is a merciful shadow thrown by a high bank and hedge, and there, in defiance of all the laws of etiquette and the usages of society, I take off my coat and waistcoat, and walk along with them thrown over my arm, as though I were a tramp. I wonder what the few people I meet think of me, for I am decently attired, and have positively an all-round collar. How inexpressibly shocked that phaeton-full of Lancastrians that has just passed me (I have a strong idea that I took tea with some of them last week) must be. What can the burly farmer in the chaise-cart who pulls up and says interrogatively, "teaaking a weauork?" think. I wonder at all this; but much more do I wonder where the next beer-oasis in this dusty desert is.

I had fortified myself with a good breakfast, and a "dobbin" of brown ale before I left Lancaster, and had sternly said to myself, "no beer till Garstaing," which is half way. But at the very outset of my twenty miles, at Scotforth, I was sorely tempted to turn aside (two roads diverge there) towards the pleasant village of Cockerham, on the road to which I know of a beery nook, where there is a little woman, licensed to be drunk on the premises, in a tiny house, of which the back-door opens into a green churchyard, with tombstones hundreds of years old; a little dame, who, though a Catholic herself, has, in her little library on the hanging shelf beside her missal and Thomas A'Kempis, a copy of Fuller's "Worthies," and Barclay's "Apology for the Quakers." Oh! for a mug of brown beer at the sign of the Traveller's Joy. Oh! for the sanded floor, the long clean pipe, the *Kendal Mercury* three weeks old, the "Worthies," the "Quakers!" Beer and happiness? Why not? There are times when a mug of ale, a pipe, and an old newspaper may be the essence of mundane felicity. Get away, you luxurious Persians.

I hate your epicurean splendours; and, little boy, bind my brow with a simple hop-garland, and bring me some more beer.

I did not turn off towards Cockerham, however, because I was ashamed. When I am on fire, however, and my stomach is full of hot dust, I throw shame to the winds, and say to resolution, "Get thee behind me." (I am always leaving that tiresome resolution behind.) In this strait I meet a tinker. He is black, but friendly. He is a humourist, as most tinkers are, and sells prayer-books, besides tin-pots, which most tinkers do. Straightway he knows of the whereabouts of beer, and proposes a libation. I accept. More than this, he insists upon "standing a pot." Am I to insult this tinker by refusing to accept his proffered hospitality? No! He and I dive down a cunning lane, which none but a tinker could discover, and the foaming felicity is poured out to us. The tinker drinks first: I insist upon his drinking first. When he hands me the pot he points to the side of the vessel on which he has himself drunk, and suggests that I should apply my lips to the opposite side. "My mouth it may be sawdery," he says. Could Lord Chesterfield, in all his wiggishness and priggishness, have been politer than this?

When we get into the high road again the tinker sings me a Cumberland song, in which there are about nineteen verses, and of which I can understand about four lines. I can only make out that "th' Deil's i' th' lasses o' Pearith" (probably Penrith), and that "Sukey, th' prood mantymecker, tu luik at a navvy thowt sin," which is gratifying to know, surveying the society of navvies (excellent persons as they may be in their operative way) from a genteel point of view. I am dimly given to understand, however, in a subsequent stanza, that the haughty Sukey so far changed her opinion of navvies as to elope with one; and while I ponder over this sad decadence, and instance of how the mighty are fallen, the tinker bids me good-day and leaves me. He is a worthy man.

There is a lull just now in the heat. General Phœbus has sheathed his sword for the moment, and is refreshing himself in his golden tent. The sky is almost colourless; the trees are dark

and ominous; broad gray-green shadows are cast across the landscape. Perhaps, it is going to rain. How glad I am that I have not got an umbrella! But the hope is fallacious. All at once the sudden sun darts out again, General Phœbus is on horseback giving the word to fire and reload, and I begin to fry again.

Five miles and a half to Garstaing. Four miles and a half to Garstaing—three—two—one mile to Garstaing. The milestones are obliging, and run on manfully before me. It is just one o'clock in the afternoon when I enter Garstaing itself; much to my own satisfaction, having attained my halfway house, and accomplished ten of my appointed twenty miles. I think I am entitled to bread and cheese at Garstaing, likewise to the pipe of peace, which I take on a gate leading into a field, solacing myself meanwhile with a view of a *pas-de-deux* between a young peasant woman in a jacket and a lively mottled calf, which will not submit to be caught and bound with cords to the horns of a cart, on any terms; frisking, and dodging, and scampering about, either with an instinctive prescience of the existence of such a thing as roast fillet of veal with mild stuffing, or rioting in that ignorance of the possibility of the shambles which is bliss to butcher's meat.

I find Garstaing a little market town—a big village rather, with many public-houses, and an amazing juvenile population. The children positively swarm, and, musing, I am compelled to dissent from the moralist who asserts that poor men are not fond of children. It is not only the rich Numenius who glories in multiplying his offspring; and though the days are gone when "a family could drive their herds, and set their children upon camels, and lead them till they saw a fat soil watered with rivers, and there sit them down without paying rent, till their own relations might swell up into a patriarchate, and their children be enough to possess all the regions that they saw, and their grandchildren become princes, and themselves build cities and call them by the name of a child and become the fountain of a nation";—though these happy patriarchal days are fled, I can never find any disinclination among the veriest poor to have great families. Bread is hard to get, God knows; but the humble meal never

seems scantier for a child the more or less. I have heard of men who thanked heaven they had no children, and prayed that they might not have any; but I never knew one who so misused a prayer. Far more frequently have I met the father mourning and refusing to be comforted for the loss of one of his twelve children—though that twelfth were the youngest, and an idiot.

So, farewell Garstaing, and farewell temptation; for Garstaing, though small, though rural, though apparently innocent, has its temptations. It possesses a railway station; and when I have finished my pipe, the train bound for Preston has pulled up, and is ready to start again. I am sorely moved to abandon my twenty miles project, and take a second-class ticket for the rest of the journey. But, self-shame (the strongest of all, for no man likes to look ridiculous in his own eyes) comes to my aid. The day seems lowering somewhat, and promises a cool afternoon, and I dismiss the locomotive as a mere figment—a puffing, drinking, smoking, superficial, inconsequential surface-skimmer, skurrying through the country as though he were riding a race, or running away from a bailiff, or travelling for a house in the cotton trade.

I walk resolutely on my journey from Garstaing: the milestones altering their tone now, and announcing so many miles and a half to Preston. The treacherous sun, which has been playing a game of hide-and-seek with me all day, comes out again with a redoubled fury, and burns me to a white heat. Worse than this, I am between two long stages of beer, and a rustic, in a wide-awake hat, informs me that the next house of entertainment is at Cabus, "a bad fower mile fadder an." Worse than all, there is no cottage, farm-house, lodge-gate to be seen where I can obtain a drink of water.

I am parched, swollen, carbonised. A little girl passes me with an empty tin can in which she has carried her father's beer with his dinner to the hay-field. The vacuity of the vessel drives me to frenzy. My nature abhors such a vacuum. There are certainly pools where geese are gabbling, rivulets whither come the thirsty cows to drink, ditches where the lonely donkey washes down his meal of thistle. But I have no cup, waterproof cap, not even an

egg-shell, in which I could scoop out water enough for a draught. I have broken my pipe, and cannot, even if I would, drink out of its bowl. I am ashamed of using my boot as a goblet. I might, it is true, lie down by the side of a ditch, and drink like a beast of the field; but I have no fancy for eating, while I drink, of the toad, the tadpole, the water-newt, the swimming-frog, the old rat, the ditch dog, and the green mantle of the standing pool. Poor Tom could do no more than that, who was whipped from tything to tything, and whose food for seven long years was "mice and rats, and such small deer."

I lean over a bridge, beneath which ripples a little river. The channel is partially dry, but a clear, sparkling little stream hurries along over the pebbles most provokingly. I groan in bitterness of spirit as I see this tantalising river, and am about descending to its level, and making a desperate attempt to drink out of the hollow of my hands, at the risk of ruining my all-round collar, when, in my extremity on the river's bank, I descry Pot. Pot is of common red earthenware—broken, decayed, full of dried mud and sand—but I hail Pot as my friend, as my deliverer.

I descend. I very nearly break my shins over a log of timber. I incur the peril of being indicted for poaching or trespassing in a fishing preserve. I seize Pot. Broken as he is, there is enough convexity in him to hold half-a-pint of water. I carefully clean out his incrustation of dried mud. I wipe him, polish him tenderly, as though I loved him. And then, oh, all ye water gods, I Drink! How often, how deeply, I know not; but I drink till I remember that the water swells a man, and that I should be a pretty sight if I were swelled; whereupon with a sigh I resign Pot, give him an extra polish, place him in a conspicuous spot for the benefit of some future thirsty wayfarer, and leave him, invoking a blessing upon his broken head. This done I resume my way rejoicing. I catch up the milestones that were getting on ahead, and just as the cool of the afternoon begins, I am at my journey's end. I have walked my twenty miles, and am ready for the juicy steak, the cool tankard, the long deep sleep, and the welcome railway back to Lancaster.

I beg to state that from Lancaster, whence I started at nine a.m., to Preston, where I arrive about five p.m., in this long, hot walk of twenty miles, I see no castle, tower, gentleman's mansion, pretty cottage, bosky thicket, or cascade. The whole walk is eminently commonplace. A high road, common hedges, common fields, common cows and sheep, common people and children—these are all I have seen. The whole affair is as insipid as cold boiled veal. How many insipid things there are! A primrose by the river's brim was a yellow primrose to Peter Bell, and it was nothing more; but take the primrose, the cold boiled veal, even my tiresome walk of twenty miles, in an artistic light, and something may be gained from each.

XV.

First Fruits.

OF primary causes or primary colours, I am neither philosopher nor optician enough to be enabled profitably to discourse. Yet there are primaries—first things—in all our lives very curious and wonderful, replete with matter for speculation, interesting because they come home to and can be understood by us all.

That it is "*le premier pas qui coûte*"—that the first step is the great point—is as much a household word to us, and is as familiar to our mouths as that the descent of Avernus is unaccompanied by difficulty, or that one member of the feathered creation held in the hand is worth two of the same species in the bush. And, if I might be permitted to add to the first quoted morsel of proverbial philosophy a humble little rider of my own, I would say that we *never* forget the first step, the first ascent, the first stumble, the first fall. Time skins over the wound of later years, and, looking at the cicatrice (if, indeed, a scar should remain), we even wonder who inflicted the wound, where or how, or when it was inflicted, and when and where healed. But the first-born of our wounds are yet green, and we can see the glittering glaive, and feel the touch of the steel, now that our hair is grizzled, and our friends and enemies are dead, and we have other allies and foes who were babies in the old time when we got that hurt.

Many men have as many minds, but we are all alike in this respect. The camera may be costly rosewood or plain deal, the lens of rare pebble or simple bottle glass, but the first impressions come equally through the focus, and are photographed with equal force on the silver tablet or collodionised papyrus of memory.

The duke and the dustman, the countess and the costermonger, the schoolboy and the whiteheaded patriarch—for all the dreary seas that flow between the to-day they live in, and the yesterday wherein they began life—still, like the cliffs in Cristabel, bear the "mark of that which once hath been."

Many primaries are locked up in the secret cabinets of the mind, of which we have mislaid (and think we have lost) the keys; but we have not; and, from time to time, finding them in bunches in old coat pockets, or on disregarded split rings, we open them. From the old desk of the mind we take the first love letter, of which the ink is so yellow now, and was so brilliant once, but whose characters are as distinct as ever. From the old wardrobe of the mind we draw the first tail-coat—thread-bare, musty, and worm-eaten, now; but the first tail-coat for all that. For all that we may have been twice bankrupt and once insolvent; for all that Jack may have been transported, or Ned consigned to his coffin years ago, or Tom barbecued in Typee or Omoo regions; for all that we may be riding in golden coaches, and denying that we ever trotted in the mud; for all that we may have changed our names, or tacked titles to them, or given the hand that was once horny and labour-stained a neat coat of blood-red crimson, and nailed it on a shield like a bat on a barn door; for all that we eat turtle instead of tripe, and drink Moselle instead of "mux"; the primaries shall never be for-gotten, the moment when our foot pressed the first step shall never vanish. Cast the stone as far into the river of Lethe as you will, the sluggish tide shall wash it back again, and, after playing duly with it on the sand, ever land it high and dry upon the beach.

Male primaries and female primaries there are, and I am of the ruder sex; but there are many common to both sexes.

Not this one though, the first—well, there is no harm in it!—the first pair of trousers. Who does not remember, who can ever forget, those much desiderated, much prized, much feared, much admired articles of dress? How stiff, angular, hard, wooden, they seemed to our youthful limbs! How readily, but for the

proper pride and manliness we felt in them—the utter majority and independence of seven years of age—we would have cast them off fifty times the very first day we wore them, and, resuming the kilt, have once more roamed our little world a young highlander! How (all is vanity!) we mounted on surreptitious chairs, viewed ourselves in mirrors, and, being discovered in the act by pretty cousins, blushed dreadfully, and were brought thereby to great grief and shame! What inexpressible delight in that first plunge of the hand (and half the arm) into the trousers pocket, in the first fingering of the silver sixpence deposited five fathoms deep, for luck! What bitter pain and humiliation we felt when, first strutting forth abroad in them, rude, contumelious boys mocked us, likened us to a pair of tongs, aimed at our legs with peg-tops! What agonies we suffered from that wicked youth (he must have been hanged or transported in after years) who, with a nail—a rusty nail—tore the left leg of those trousers into a hideous rent, and then ran away laughing! what tortures at the thought of what our parents and guardians would say!

Those premier pantaloons were snuff-coloured, buttoning over the jacket, and forming, with an extensive shirt frill, what was then called a "skeleton suit." They shone very much, and had a queer smell of the snuff-coloured dye. They gave the wearer something of a trussed appearance, like a young fowl ready for the spit. It was a dreadful fashion, as offering irresistible temptations to the schoolmaster to use his cane. You were got up ready for him, and abstinence was more than he could bear. We confess to a horrid relish in this wise ourselves at the present time. When we see (rare spectacle now-a-days) a small boy in a skeleton suit, and his hands in his pockets, our fingers itch to be at him!

The first picture book! We date from the time of the Prince Regent, and remember picture books about dandies—satires upon that eminent personage himself, possibly—but *we* never knew it. In those days there was a certain bright, smooth cover for picture books, like a glorified surgical plaister. It has gone out this long, long, time. The picture book that seems to have been our first,

was about one Mr. Pillblister (in the medical profession, we presume, from the name), who gave a party. As the legend is impressed on our remembrance it opened thus:

"Mr. Pillblister, and Betsy, his sister,
Determined on giving a treat;
Gay dandies they call,
To a supper and ball,
At their house in Great Camomile Street."

The pictures represented male dandies in every stage of preparation for this festival, holding on to bedposts to have their stays laced, embellishing themselves with artificial personal graces of many kinds, and enduring various humiliations in remote garrets. One gentleman found a hole in his stocking at the last moment.

"A hole in my stocking,
O how very shocking!
Says poor Mr. (Some one) enraged;
It's always my fate
To be so very late
When at Mr. Pillblister's engaged!"

If we recollect right, they all got there at last, and passed a delightful evening. When we first came to London (not the least of our primaries) we rejected the Tower, Westminster Abbey, St. Paul's, and the Monument, and entreated to be taken to Great Camomile Street.

About the same period we tasted our first oyster. A remarkable sensation! We feel it slipping down our throats now, like a kind of maritime castor-oil, and are again bewildered by an unsatisfactory doubt whether it *was* the oyster that made that mysterious disappearance, or whether we are going to begin to taste it presently.

The first play! The promise, the hope deferred, the saving clause of "no fine weather no play," the more than Murphian* scrutiny of the weather during the day! Willingly did we submit, at five o'clock that evening, to the otherwise and at any other time detestable ordeal of washing and combing, and being

* Murphy was a weather prophet of the epoch, whom one remarkably lucky guess rendered famous.

made straight. We did not complain when the soap got in our eyes; we bore the scraping of the comb and the rasping of the brush without a murmur; we were going to the play, and we were happy. Dressed, of course, an hour too soon; drinking tea as a mere ceremony—for the tea might have been hay and hot water (not impossible), and the bread and butter might have been sawdust, for anything we could taste of it; sitting, with petful impatience, in the parlour, trying on the first pair of white kid gloves, making sure that the theatre would be burnt down, or that papa would never come home from the office, or mamma would be prevented, by some special interference of malignant demons, from having her dress fastened, or that (to a positive certainty) a tremendous storm of hail, rain, sleet, and thunder, would burst out, as we stepped into the fly, and send us, theatreless, to bed.

We went to the play, and were happy. The sweet, dingy, shabby, little country theatre, we declared and believed to be much larger than either Drury Lane or Covent Garden, of which little Master Cheesewright—whose father was a tailor, and always had orders—was wont to brag. Dear narrow, uncomfortable, faded-cushioned, flea-haunted, single tier of boxes! The green curtain, with a hole in it, through which a bright eye peeped; the magnificent officers, in red and gold coats (it was a garrison town), in the stage box, who volunteered, during the acts, the popular catch of

> "Ah, how, Sophia, can you leave
> Your lover, and of hope bereave?"

for our special amusement and delectation, as we thought then, but, as we are inclined to fear now, under the influence of wine. The pit, with so few people in it; with the lady, who sold apples and oranges, sitting in a remote corner, like Pomona in the sulks. And the play, when it did begin—stupid, badly acted, badly got up as it very likely was! Our intense, fear-stricken admiration of the heroine, when she let her back hair down, and went mad, in blue. The buff boots of Runt, the manager. The funny man (there never was such a funny man) in a red scratch wig, who,

when imprisoned in the deepest dungeon beneath the castle moat, sang a comic song about a leg of mutton. The sorry quadrille band in the orchestra, to our ears as scientifically melodious as though Costa had been conductor; Sivori, first fiddle; Richardson, flute; or Bottesini, double bass.

The refreshment, administered to us by kind hands during the intervals of performance,—never to be forgotten oranges, immemorial sponge-cakes. The admonitions to "sit up," the warnings not to "talk loud," in defiance of which (seeing condonatory smiles on the faces of those we loved) we screamed outright with laughter, when the funny man in the after-piece, essaying to scale a first-floor front by means of a rope ladder, fell, ladder and all, to the ground. The final fall of the green curtain, followed by an aromatic perfume of orange-peel and lamp-oil, and the mysterious appearance of ghostly brown holland draperies from the private boxes. Shawling, cloaking, home, and more primaries—for then it was when we for the first time "sat up late," and for the first time ever tasted sandwiches after midnight, or imbibed a sip, a very small sip, of hot something and water.

Who can lay his hand upon his waistcoat pocket, and say he has forgotten his first watch? Ours was a dumpy silver one, maker's name Snoole, of Chichester, number seventeen thousand three hundred and ten. Happy Snoole, to have made so many watches; yet we were happy—oh, how happy! to possess even one of them. We looked at that watch continually; we set it at every clock, and consulted it every five minutes; we opened and shut it, we wound it up, we regulated it, we made it do the most amazing things, and suddenly run a little chain off a wheel in a tearing manner—after which it stopped. How obliging we were to everybody who wished to know what o'clock it was! Did we ever go to bed without that watch snug under the pillow? Did not a lock of our sweetheart's hair have a sweet lurking-place between the inner and outer cases?

Where is that dumpy silver watch—where is the more ambitious pinchbeck (there are no pinchbeck watches now) that

followed? Where is the gold Geneva, the highly-finished hunter, with compensation balance and jewelled in a thousand and one holes, from Benson of Ludgate Hill, the silver lever? How many watches have we bought, sold, swopped, and bartered, since then; and which of them do we remember half so well as the dumpy silver, maker's name Snoole, Chichester, seventeen thousand three hundred and ten!

And the first lock of a sweetheart's hair brings me to the primary of primaries—first love. We don't believe, we can't believe, the man who tells us he has never been in love, and can't remember with delicious and yet melancholy distinctness all about it. We don't care whether it was the little girl with plaited tails, in frilled trousers, and a pinafore (though we never truly loved another); or your schoolmaster's daughter, or the lady who attended to the linen department, whom we thought a houri, but who was probably some forty years of age. You may have loved Fanny, Maria, Louisa, Sarah, Martha, Harriet, or Charlotte, or fancied that you loved them, since then; but in your heart of hearts you still keep the portrait of your first love, bright.

By first love we mean what is commonly known as "calf love." Our reminiscences of real first love are indissolubly connected with a disrelish for our victuals, and a wild desire to dress regardless of expense; of dismal wailings in secret; of a demoniacal hatred of all fathers, cousins, and brothers; of hot summer days passed in green fields, staring at the birds on the boughs, and wishing—oh, how devoutly wishing!—that we were twenty-one years of age.

The first baby! The doctor, the imperious nurse, the nervous walking up and down the parlour, the creaking stairs, the nurse again, imperious still, but now triumphant. The little stranger sparring like an infant Tom Cribb in long clothes. That baby's acts and deeds for months! His extraordinary shrewdness, his unexampled beauty, his superhuman capacity for "taking notice," his Admirable Crichtonian qualities. He *was* a baby! Another and another little stranger have dropped in since then. Each was *a* baby, but not *the* baby!

We hope and trust you may never have had this primary we are about to speak of. But there *are* some persons of the male sex who may remember with sufficient minuteness the first time they ever got—elevated. If *you* do, the impression will never be eradicated from your mind. Competent persons have declared you, on several subsequent occasions, to have been incapable of seeing a hole in a ladder. The earth seemed to spin round in an inconsistent manner; the pavement was soft—very soft—and felt, you said, as though you were walking on clouds; until suddenly, without the slightest provocation, it came up and smote you on the forehead. Of course, you didn't fall down—that would have been ridiculous. Slanderers declared that you attempted to climb up the gutter, under the impression that it was a lamp-post; and, being dissuaded therefrom, vehemently endeavoured to play the harp upon the area railings. How distinctly you remember to this day how completely you forgot everything; how you dreamt you were a water jug with no water in it—Tantalus, Prometheus, Ixion, all rolled into one; how you awoke the next morning without the slightest idea of how you got into bed; how sick, sorry, and repentant you were!

Being in genteel society, we would not, of course, hint that any one of our readers can remember so very low and humiliating a thing as the first visit to "My Uncle"—the first pawnbroker. We have been assured, though, by those whose necessities have sometimes compelled them to resort for assistance to their avuncular relation, that the first visit—the primary pawning—can never be forgotten. The timorous, irresolute glance at the three golden balls; the transparent hypocrisy of looking at the silver forks, watches jewelled in an indefinite number of holes, china vases, and Doyley and Mant's Family Bible ("to be sold a bargain"), in the window; the furtive, skulking slide round the corner, to the door in the court where the golden balls are emblazoned again, with announcements of "Office" and "Money Lent;" the mental perplexity as to which of the little cell-doors looks the most benevolent; and the timorous horror of finding the selected one occupied by an embarrassed shoemaker raising

money by debentures on soleless wellingtons and bluchers. All these, we have been told, are memorable things.

Another primary—the first death. The tan spread on the street before the door; its odour in the house; the first burst of grief when all was over; the strange instinctive way in which those who seemed to know nothing of Death went about its grim requirements. The one appalling never-to-be-forgotten undertaker's knock at nine in the evening. The steps on the stairs; the horrible agility and ghostly quietness. Then, the gentle melancholy that succeeded to the first bitterness of sorrow.

XVI.

Old Clothes.

STERN legislature has laid its red, or rather blue, right hand, in the shape of police enactments, upon many of the cries of London. No more may the portly dustman toll his bell, and with lusty lungs make quiet streets re-echo to the cry of "Dust-ho!" The young sweep's shrill announcement of his avocation is against the law; and the sweep himself—first mute perforce—has now voluntarily ceded his place to the ramoneur, and has vanished altogether. Of the cries which the New Police Act has not included in its ban, many have come to disuse, and must be numbered now with old fashions and old-fashioned people. The cries are dead, and the criers too. The "small-coal-man" and the vendor of saloop; the merchant who so loudly declared in his boyhood that if he had as much money as he could tell, he would not cry young lambs to sell; the dealer in sweet-stuff, who sung in so fine a baritone voice, and with so unctuous an emphasis the one unvarying refrain, "My brandy-balls! my brandy-balls! My slap-up, slap-up brandy-balls!" the seller of rotten-stone and emery, who, by way of rider to the announcement of his wares, added strong adjurations; the reduced gentlewoman who cried "cats'-meat!" in so subdued a tone (*she* flourished before my time, and I only regard her in a traditional light);—all these are gone.

There was a work published towards the close of the last century, full of copperplate pictures of the various London street-sellers, with notices of their "cries." Look through the book

now, and you will find few that are not obsolete. We have grown luxurious, and cry "Pine-apples, a penny a slice!"—moral, and have superseded the tossing pieman, who cried, "Toss or buy! up and win 'em!" by a gaudy hot-pie "depôt," with plate-glass window and mahogany fixtures. We have grown fastidious, and have deserted "'Taters, all hot!" for the "Irish fruit warehouse." The voice of him who cried "One a penny, two a penny, hot cross buns!" is hushed. Goodness help us! where are we going to? The cry of "Kearots" and "Sparrow-grass" will go next, I suppose; "cats'-meat" will no longer be allowed to be cried; "Milk ho" is doomed; the cries of "Butcher!" and "Baker!" will be rendered illegal and contrary to the statute.

But, as I write, floats on the ambient air, adown the quiet street in which I live, softly through the open window, gently to my pleased ears, a very familiar and welcome cry. I have always heard *that* cry, and always shall, I hope. It was cried in London streets years before I was born, and will be cried years after I am dead. It never varies, never diminishes in volume or sonorous melody, this cry; for, as the world wags, and they that dwell in it live and die, they must be clothed—and, amidst the wear and tear of life, their clothes become worn and torn, too;—so we shall always have old clothes to buy or sell; and for many a year, down many a quiet street, through many an open window, shall float that old familiar cry—"Old Clo'!"

My first recollections of "Old Clo'" are entwined with the remembrance of a threat, very awful and terrifying to me then, of being imprisoned in the bag of an old clothesman, and forthwith conveyed away. My threatener was a nursemaid, who, if I remember right, left our service in consequence of the mysterious disappearance of a new silk dress, which she solemnly averred my mother to "have worn clean out;" and the clothesman was a dreadful old man, with a long, tangled, gray-reddish beard, a hawk nose, which, like the rebuke of the nautical damsel in "Wapping Old Stairs," was never without a tear. This dreadful personage

carried a bag of alarming size. I am not ashamed to say now that I perfectly believed this clothesman (a harmless Israelite, no doubt) to be capable of effecting my capture and abduction on the commission of any juvenile indiscretion whatsoever; and that he, and "the sweep," a mysterious phantom I was often menaced with, but never saw; a "black dog," addicted to sitting on the shoulders of naughty children; and a "big black man," supposed to be resident in the back kitchen, whence he made periodical irruptions for the purpose of devouring insubordinate juveniles, formed in their glomerate natures the incarnation, to my youthful mind, of a certain personage who shall be nameless, but who has been likened to a roaring lion.

Strangely enough, this old clothesman of mine (he was dreadfully old when I first knew him) doesn't seem to get any older, and cries "Clo'!" to this day with undiminished voice and bag. I am not afraid of him now, and have even held conversations with him touching the statistics and profits of his trade. But I dream about him frequently, and never look at that very large bag of his without a certain sort of awed and hushed curiosity. Very curious are early impressions in their ineffaceability. We can remember the father or the sister who died when we were babes, almost with minute distinctness, and yet forget what happened the day before yesterday. How well we can remember the history of Jack Horner, and the adventures of the other Jack who rose in life through the instrumentality of a bean-stalk; and yet, how often we forget the matter of the first leader in the *Morning Bellower* before we have got half through the second one!

The subject of left-off garments has always been an interesting one to me, for it is fertile in the homely picturesque. Yet there are many mysteries connected with the old clothes question which, though I have studied it somewhat profoundly, I am as yet unable to fathom. To what I do know, however, the reader is perfectly welcome.

The statistics of ancient habiliments have already been fully and admirably touched upon in "another place," as honourable

Members say. The aspect of Rag Fair, Cloth Fair, Petticoat Lane, and Holywell Street have, likewise, been described over and over again; so that my lay will be, perhaps, only an old song to a questionably new tune after all. But there is nothing new under the sun to speak of, and to be entirely original would be, moreover, as much out of the fashion as it is out of my power to be so.

Imprimis of old clothesmen. Why should the Hebrew race appear to possess a monopoly in the purchase and sale of dilapidated costume? Why should their voices, and theirs alone, be employed in the constant iteration of the talismanic monosyllables "Old Clo'?" In Glasgow, they say, the Irish have commenced the clothes trade, and have absolutely pushed the Jew clothesmen from their stools. I can scarcely believe so astonishing an assertion. I could as soon imagine an Israelitish Life Guardsman as an Hibernian old clothesman. I can't—can you? can anybody? realise the strident, guttural "Ogh Clo'" of the Hebrew, the *mot d'ordre*, the shibboleth, the password of the race, transposed into the mellifluous buttermilky notes of the sister isle?

My old clothesmen are all of the "people." Numerous are they, persevering, all-observant, astute, sagacious, voluble yet discreet, prudent and speculative. They avoid crowded main streets, and prefer shadier and quieter thoroughfares. These do they perambulate indefatigably at all seasons, in all weathers. Lives there the man who ever saw an old clothesman with an umbrella?—I mean using it for the purpose an umbrella is generally put to. He may have, and very probably has, half-a-dozen in his bag, or somewhere about him, but never was he known to elevate one above his head.

I am sorry to gird at an established idea, but duty compels me to do so. Artists generally represent the old clothesman with three, and sometimes four, hats superposed one above the other. Now, though I have seen him with many hats in his hands or elsewhere, I never yet saw him with more than one hat on his head; and I have been assured by a respectable member of the fraternity, with whom I lately transacted busi-

ness, that the three-hat tradition has no foundation whatever; in fact, that it is a mere device of the enemy, as shallow a libel as the ballad of "Hugh of Lincoln," or the assertion that Jews cannot expectorate, but must, *nolens volens*, slobber. The three-hatted clothesman, if he ever existed, is obsolete; but I incline to consider him a myth, an æsthetic pre-Raphaelite abstraction, like the Sphinx, or the woman caressing her Chimæra.

The *old*, old clothesman is, I am sorry to say, becoming every day a swan of blacker hue. Young Israel has taken the field, and Old Jewry—old, bearded, gabardined, bent-backed Jewry is nearly extinct. It may be, perhaps, that after a certain age he abandons the bag, and laying in a large stock of crockery-ware, and vouchers for enormous sums, retires to the East, where he awaits the goods which the gods of diplomacy provide him.

Very rarely now is this gabardine—that long, loose, shapeless garment, the same on which Antonio spat—to be seen in London streets. I recollect the time when nearly all the old clothesmen wore it, and I am certain *my* clothesman—the bogey of my childhood—was wont to be habited therein. Young Israel wears cut-away coats, and chains, and rings; has eschewed the beard for the curl known as the aggravator, the chin tuft, and the luxuriant fringe of whisker; carries the bag jauntily, not wearily and cumbrously, as Old Jewry did. But the *inside* is the same, the sagacity, the perseverance, the bargaining—oh! the keen bargaining is as keen as ever.

Then there is the bagless clothesman—the apparently bagless one at least—the *marchand sans sac*. You may be in the street, and meet a gentleman attired in the first style of fashion, walking easily along, twirling his cane, and thinking, it would seem, of nothing at all. Passing him, you catch his eye; you find out that he has not got that piercing black eye and that acutely aquiline nose for nothing. He slides up to you, and in an insinuating *sotto voce*, something between a stage "aside" and an invitation to "buy a little dawg" from a Regent Street

fancier, asks you the momentous question, "Have you anything to shell, sir?"

The interrogatory may have been put in Kensington, and you may live at Mile-end; but the bagless clothesman will not be deterred by any question of distance from accompanying you. He would walk by your side from Indus to the Pole, with that peculiar sidling, shuffling gait of his, on the bare chance of the reversion of a single pair of pantaloons; and, should you so far yield to his seductive entreaties as to summon him to your domicile, he will produce, with magical rapidity, from some unknown receptacle, a BAG—when, or where, or whence, or how obtained, it is not within the compass of human ken to know.

A marvellous article is that bag. It will hold everything and anything: always stuffed to repletion, it will hold more. The last straw, it has been aphoristically observed, breaks the camel's back; but trusses of trousers, stacks of paletôts, ricks of waistcoats, thrust into this much-enduring bag, seem not to tax its powers of endurance to anything above a moderate degree. As to breaking the bag's back, it is far more likely that it would dislocate the dorsal vertebræ of any novice bold enough to carry it than its own.

A friend of mine met with a bagless clothesman on the Queen's highway, and in his habit as he lived. Being about to leave London, he acknowledged the soft impeachment of having a few old clothes to dispose of, and of which he thought he might as well make a few shillings. Trousers, waistcoats, and coats were produced, and passed in review, and then my friend yielded to a Machiavelian suggestion of the clothesman relative to old boots. Remembering the existence of a decayed pair of wellingtons under the parlour sofa, he descended to fetch them, leaving—*infelix puer!*—the clothesman alone. He reascended: the usual chaffering, bickering, and eventual bargain-driving took place. The money agreed on was paid, and the clothesman departed. But—oh, duplicity of clothesmankind!—the nefarious Israelite had stuffed into his bag the only pair of evening dress continuations my friend possessed. There was likewise a blue satin hand-

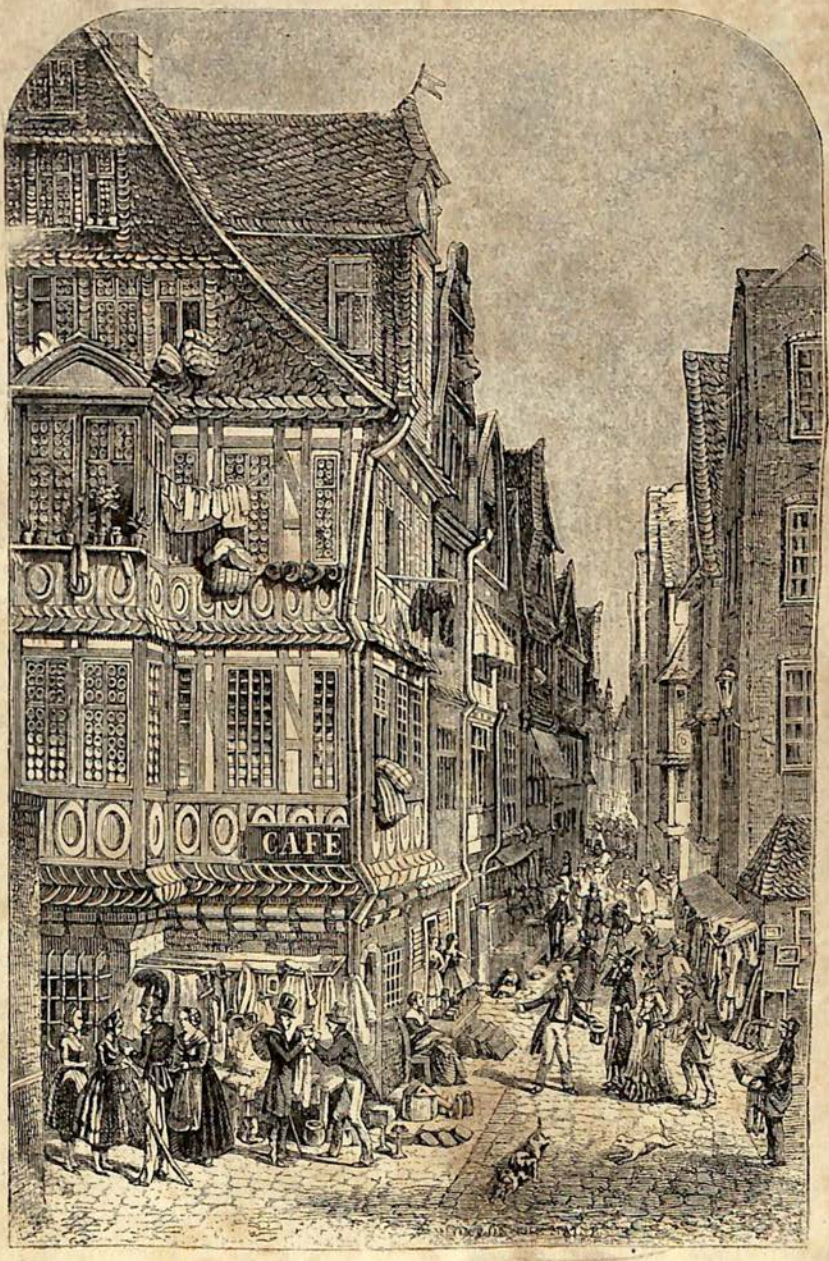
kerchief with a white spot—what is popularly, I believe, known as a bird's-eye fogle—which was missing; and though, of course, *I* would not insinuate anything to the disadvantage of the carrier of the bag, the disappearance will be allowed to be strange.

Mrs. Gumm, however, my friend's landlady—who has sheltered so many medical students beneath her roof that she may almost be considered a member of the profession, and who reads *The Lancet* on Sunday afternoons with quite a relish—Mrs. Gumm now stoutly avers that he *did* annex them; declaring, in addition, her firm belief that he appropriated at the same time, and stowed away in his bag, a feather-bed of considerable size and a miniature portrait of the Otaheitan chief who was supposed to have eaten a portion of Captain Cook: which portrait was presented to her by the Rev. Fugue Trumpetstop, an earnest man, and now minister of finance to King Kamehameha XXXIII. of the Sandwich Islands. I think that if there had been a chest of drawers or a four-post bedstead missing, the dealer in worn-out apparel would have been suspected as the spoliator.

Carrying the bag, and crying "Ogh Clo'!" seems a sort of novitiate, or apprenticeship, which all Hebrews are subjected to. They can flesh their maiden swords in the streets, without its being at all considered derogatory. I please myself with the theory, sometimes, that of the millionnaires I see rolling by in carriages, read of as giving magnificent balls and suppers, hear of as the pillars of commerce and the girders of public credit, many have in their youth passed through the dusky probation of the bag. Keen chaffering about ragged paletôts and threadbare trousers prepared them, finished them, gave them a sharper edge for the negotiation of the little bill and the sale of the undoubted specimens of the old masters. And from these to millions there were but few steps.

There is a dear old dirty, frowsy, picturesque, muddy, ill-paved, worse-lighted, immensely rich old street in Frankfort, called the "Judengasse,"* a kind of compound of the worst parts of Duke's Place and St. Mary Axe, and the best parts of Petticoat

* This characteristic old street was demolished a few years ago.



THE JUDEN-GASSE, FRANKFORT.

Lane, and Church Lane, St. Giles's. Here dwell the Jews of Frankfort—as dirty, as dingy, and as wealthy as their abiding-place. Departing at morn and returning at eve, with the never-failing bag, you may see the young Israelites. Sitting at the doors, smoking their pipes in tranquillity, are the patriarchs; gossiping at the windows are the daughters of Judah, in robes of rainbow-hued silks or satins, but with under-garments of equivocal whiteness; sprawling in the gutters, amidst old clothes, pots, pans, household furniture, and offal, are the bright-eyed little children. I like much to walk in the Judengasse (after a good dinner at the Hotel de Russie), smoking the pipe of peace and Hungarian tobacco; glancing now at the old clothes, now at the clothesmen, now at the little babies in the kennel—peeping cunningly at the heavy iron-stanchioned doors and the windows, protected at night (and for reasons, the rogues!) with iron-bound shutters. I conjecture how many colossal fortunes have been made out of that shabby, grubby, ill-smelling old street. How many latent Rothschilds there may be in its back attics; how many Sampayos yet to come are sprawling in its kennels! The discipline of the bag is well observed in the Judengasse, and prospers as it does everywhere else.

And this only brings me back to my starting point, and makes me perplexed, confused, bothered. Why should the Jews deal in old clothes? Not only in London or Frankfort; who has not heard the nasal chant of the *marchand d'habits* in Paris, crying "*Vieux habits, vieux galons!*" Who has not seen him bartering with the grisette for the sale of her last Carnival's *debardeur* dress? Who has not seen him slouching along, with a portion of the said *debardeur* dress, in the shape of a pair of black velvet trousers, hanging over his arm; a pair of gold epaulettes sticking out of his coat-pocket; a cavalry sabre tucked under his arm, and an advocate's robe protruding from his as usual crammed bag? Who has not heard of the Gibraltar old clothesmen, or of the fights on board the Levant steamers between the Greeks and the Jews, on disputed questions relative to the value of cast-off caftans and burnouses?

I knew a young Turk once at Marseilles who wore patent-leather boots and perfumed himself indefatigably, but was not quite civilised for all that; for I remember making him a present of a large bottle of West India pickles, which, desiring him to *taste*, he *ate*, from the first capsicum to the last chili; from the first to the last drop of the red-hot pickling vinegar, which he drank, all without one morsel of bread or meat; smacking his lips meanwhile, and saying, "*Mi piace, questo bastimento!*" his usual expression when pleased. I remember asking him, when we were better acquainted and he had acquired a more extended knowledge of the European languages, what were the characteristics of the Jews in Constantinople? "They are dogs," he said simply, "and wear yellow handkerchiefs, and *go about the streets of Stamboul selling old clothes.*" If in Turkey, why not in Persia, in Abyssinia, in Crim Tartary—everywhere?

There is something more in it than is dreamt of in my philosophy. For aught I know, though I believe it without knowledge, the Jews of Honan in China or the black Jews of India may deal in cast-off wearing apparel. Every Jew, millionnaire as he may become afterwards, seems to begin with the bag. A fabulously rich Israelite, of whom I know something, was once solicited for some favour by a poorer member of his tribe. He declined acceding to the applicant's request. "Ah!" said his petitioner spitefully (he was an ill-favoured old man, in a snuff-coloured coat, and a handkerchief tied round his head under his hat), "you're a very great man, no doubt, now, *but I recollect the time when you used to sell pocket-handkerchiefs in public-houses!*" And so, no doubt, he had.

From the sublime to the ridiculous there is but one step; and from old clothesmen to old clothes there is but half a one. Let us consider old clothes.

Under which head, I beg to be understood, I include old hats, old boots, old linen, old anything, in fact, in which man delighteth to array himself. With the ladies (bless them!) I will not pretend just now to meddle; they have their own distinctive old clothes dealers—their *revendeuses à la toilette*, their proprietors of shops

where ladies' wardrobes are purchased. There are Eleusinian mysteries connected with this branch of the clothes trade; dark stories of duchesses' white satin dresses and dowager countesses' crimson velvet robes, about which I must have more certain information ere I discourse thereon. To the uninitiated the "Ladies' Wardrobe" is, as no doubt it is proper it should be, a mystery—a glimmering haze of dusky little shops in back streets, pink silk stockings, white satin shoes, soiled ostrich feathers, ladies' maids, and ladies themselves, shawled and muffled, and with a cab waiting at the corner of the street. Fubsy women in printed gowns and aprons are dimly visible through the haze, sometimes; and the tallyman has something mysteriously to do with the matter. I will inquire into it.

But of the old clothes appertaining to the masculine gender. If you want to see old clothes and old clothesmen in their glory, go to Cloth Fair or the Clothes Exchange. You will have to pay a small toll on entrance, towards the support of the building, but that is nothing. I should not so particularly advise you to take care of your pockets on this occasion; but I should most decidedly caution you to take care of the clothes of which those pockets form a part; for it is by no means improbable that half-a-dozen Jews will fall on you at once and tug fiercely at your garments, not with any bellicose intention, but simply with the understanding that you *must* have something to sell, and that, having no bag and being somewhat eccentric, you are actuated by a desire to sell the clothes you stand upright in.

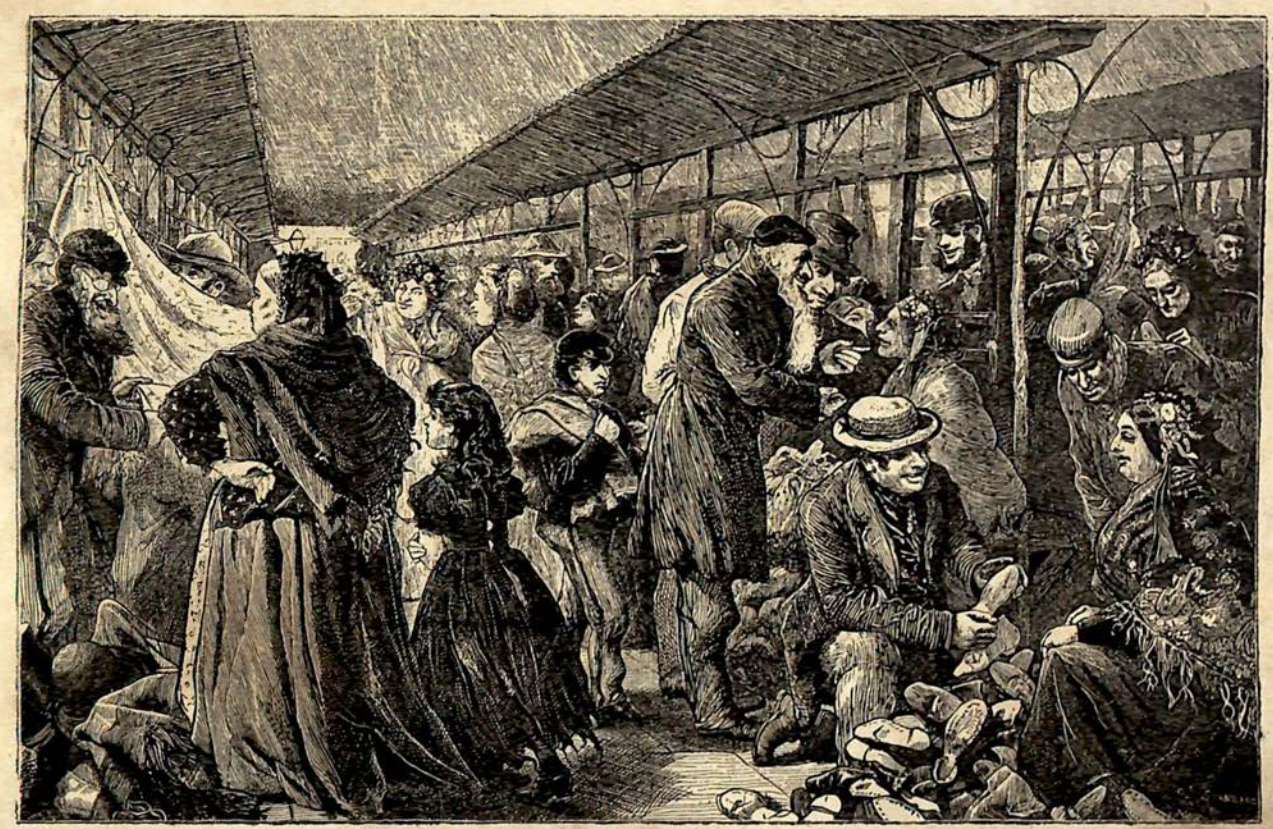
During the whole of the time the market lasts one incessant series of pacific fights takes place. Rapidly, in twos and threes, sometimes by dozens and half-dozens, swarm in the clothesmen, who have been perambulating the streets since early morn. In a trice, on these erst buyers, now sellers, fall new buyers. "What have they got to shell? For Moses' shake, vat have they got to shell? For all the prophets' shake, give them the refusal! Oh! versh the bagsh? Oh! vat ish there in it? Oh! vat you vant? Oh! vat you give?" The gigantic bag is forcibly removed from the shoulders of the resisting clothesman; it and he are tugged,

hauled, hustled, jostled about. At last he selects the merchant with whom he is desirous of doing business, and on that merchant's shopboard the multifarious contents of the wondrous bag will be vomited forth.

Gracious! will it never have done disgorging garments? More coats, more waistcoats, more continuations, a shower of hats, any quantities of pairs of boots, silk handkerchiefs, umbrellas, boys' caps, pattens; and, sir, I am not exaggerating when I state that this marvellous sack may, and has been very often known to contain, and subsequently disgorge, such miscellaneous trifles as a few pounds of dripping, a birdcage, a live poodle, a theodolite, and an ormolu clock. All is fish that comes to the clothesman's net—all clothes that comes to his bag. He would buy your head if it were loose.

On every merchant's shopboard similar heaps of hydra-natured garments are tumbling out of similar sacks. Then ensues frantic yelling, screeching, lung-tearing, ear-piercing bargain-making. They gibber, they howl, they clutch each other fiercely, and grapple over a farthing like wolves. See yonder yellow-visaged old mercator, with salt rheum in his eye and a beard like the beard of an insolvent goat grown careless of his personal appearance. He is from Amsterdam, and can speak no English; yet he gibbers, and clutches, and grapples with the keenest of his British brethren. He holds up his fingers to denote how much he will give, and no more. "For Moses' sake, another finger! S'help me, you're robbing me! S'help me, it's yoursh!" And the mercator has the best of the bargain, for your Jew, when a seller, is as loth to refuse money as he is, when a buyer, to part with it.

Now the air is darkened with legs and arms of garments held up to be inspected as to their condition. The buyer pokes, and peers into, and detects naplessness, and spies out patches, and is aware of rents, and smells out black and blue reviver, and noses darns, and discovers torn linings; the seller meanwhile watching every movement with lynx-eyed inquietude. A lull takes place—a very temporary lull—while this inspection is going on; but only wait an instant, and you shall hear the howling, screeching,



THE OLD CLOTHES EXCHANGE.

and see the clutching and grappling commence *de novo*. The air feels hot, and there is a fetid, squalid odour of rags. Jew boys stand in the midst of the market, calling sweet-stuff and hot cakes for sale. Hark at Mammon and Gammon yelling at each other, browbeating, chaffering in mutilated English and bastard Hebrew. They *do* make a great noise, certainly; but is there not a little buzz, a trifling hum of business, in the area of the Royal Exchange just before the bell rings? Does not Capel Court resound sometimes to the swell of human voices? Is not the immaculate Auction Mart itself occasionally anything but taciturn, when the advowson of a comfortable living is to be sold? We can make bargains, and noises about them too, for other things besides old clothes.

Look at that heap of old clothes—that Pelion upon Ossa of ostracised garments. A reflective mind will find homilies, satires, aphorisms, by the dozen—thought-food by the ton weight, in that pile of dress-offal. There is my lord's coat, bespattered by the golden mud on Fortune's highway; threadbare in the back with much bowing; the embroidery tarnished, the spangles all blackened; a Monmouth Street laced coat. Revivified, coaxed, and tickled into transitory splendour again, it may lend vicarious dignity to some High Chamberlain or Stick-in-Waiting at the court of the Emperor Soulouque. There is a scarlet uniform coat, heavily embroidered, which no doubt has dazzled many a nursemaid in its day. It will shine at masquerades now, or perchance be worn by Mr. Belton of the Theatre Royal; then emigrate maybe, and be the coat of office of the Commander-in-Chief of King Quashiboo's body-guard; or, with the addition of a cocked hat and spurs, form the coronation costume of King Quashiboo himself. And there is John the footman's coat, with ruder embroidery, but very like my lord's coat for all that.

There, pell-mell, cheek by jowl, in as strange juxtaposition and as strange equality, as corpses in a plague-pit, are the groom's gaiters and my Lord Bishop's spatterdashes; with—save the mark!—poor Pat's ill-darned, many-holed brogues, his bell-

crowned felt hat, his unmistakable blue coat with the brass buttons, high in the collar, short in the waist, long in the tails, and ragged all over. There is no distinction of ranks; no precedence of rank, and rank alone, here. Patrick's brogues, if they were only sound and whole, instead of holey, would command a better price than my lord's torn black silk small clothes, yon groom's gaiters are worth double the episcopal spatterdashes; and that rough fustian jacket would fetch more than the tattered dress-coat with only one sleeve, albeit 'twas made by Poole and was once worn by Beau Smith.

Where are the people, I wonder, to whom these clothes belonged? Who will wear them next? Will the episcopal spatterdashes grace the calves of a Low Church greengrocer? Will John the footman's coat be transferred to Sambo or Mungo, standing on cucumber-shinned extremities, on the foot-board of a chariot belonging to some militia field-marshal or other star of the Upper Ten Thousand of New York? Who was John, and whose footman was he? How many a weary mile the poor Jews have walked to get these sweepings of civilisation together, and make for a moment a muck-heap of fashion in Cloth Fair—a dunghill of vanity for chapmen to huckster over! All the lies and the subterfuges of dress, the padded coats and whaleboned-waistcoats, the trousers that were patched in places where the skirts hid them, have come naked to this bankruptcy. The surtout that concealed the raggedness of the body-coat beneath; the body-coat that buttoned over the shirtless chest; the boots which were not wellingtons, as in their strapped-down hypocrisy they pretended to be, but old bluchers; all are discovered, exposed, turned inside out here. If the people who wore them could only be treated in the same manner, what remarkably unpleasant things we should hear about one another, to be sure!

The Nemesis of Cloth Fair is impartial, unyielding, inexorable. She has neither favourites nor partialities: a dress-coat—be it the choicest work of a Nugee or a Buckmaster—is to her an abomination, unless something can be made of it. She regardeth

not a frock-coat, unless there is enough good cloth left in the skirts to make boys' caps of; a military stripe down a pair of trousers has no charms in her eyes; she is deaf to the voice of the embroidered vest, unless that vest be in good condition.

There are three orders of old clothes, as regards the uses to which they may be applied: First class, clothes good enough to be revivered, tricked, polished, teased, re-napped, and sold, either as superior second-hand garments in second-hand-shop streets, or pawned for as much as they will fetch and more than they are worth. Second class, old clothes which are good enough to be exported to Ireland, to Australia, and the colonies generally. Great quantities are sent to the South American Republics; and a considerably brisk trade in left-off wearing apparel is driven with that Great Northern Republic which asserts itself capable of inflicting corporal punishment on the whole of the universe. Wearing apparel is unconscionably dear in the land of freedom, and the cheap "bucks" of the model republic cannot always afford bran-new broadcloth. Third class, or very old clothes, include those that are so miserably dilapidated, so utterly tattered and torn, that they would have been, I am sure, despised and rejected even by the indifferently-dressed man who married "the maiden all forlorn."

These tatters—*haillons* the French call them—have a glorious destiny before them. Like the phœnix, they rise again from their ashes. Torn to pieces by a machine, aptly called a "devil," in grim, brick factories, northwards, they are ground, pounded, tortured into "devil's dust," or "shoddy;" by a magic process, and the admixture of a little fresh wool, they burst into broadcloth again. I need say no more. When I speak of broadcloth and "devil's dust," my acute readers will know as much about it as I do: plate-glass-shops, middlemen, sweaters, cheap clothes, and nasty. Who shall say that the Marquis of Camberwell's footmen—those cocked-hatted, bouquetted, silk-stockinged Titans—may not have, in their gorgeous costume, a considerable spice of Patrick the bog-trotter's ragged breeches and Luke the labourer's fustian jacket?

We have traditions and superstitions about almost everything in life, from the hogs in the Hampstead sewers to the ghosts in a shut-up house. There are traditions and superstitions about old clothes. Fables of marvellous sums found in the pockets of left-off garments are current, especially among the lower orders. There was the Irish gentleman who found his waistcoat lined throughout with bank-notes; and the youth who discovered that all the buttons on a coat he had bought in Petticoat Lane were sovereigns covered with cloth. Then there was Mary Jenkins, who, in the words of the *Public Advertiser* of February 14th, 1750, "deals in old clothes in Rag Fair, and sold a pair of breeches to a poor woman for sevenpence and a pint of beer. While they were drinking it in a public-house, the purchaser, in unripping the breeches, found, quilted in the waistband, eleven guineas in gold (Queen Anne's coin) and a thirty-pound bank-note dated 1729; which last she did not know the value of till she had sold it for a gallon of twopenny purl."

There are so many stories of this sort about, in old newspapers and in old gossips' mouths, that a man, however credulous, is apt to suspect that a fair majority of them are apocryphal. There is a tinge of superstition in the connection of money or fortune with clothes. Don't they put sixpence into a little boy's pocket when he is first indued with pantaloons, the *toga virilis* of youthful Britons? Don't we say that a halfpenny with a cross on it will keep the deuce out of our pockets? Don't we throw old shoes after a person for luck? and what is luck but money?

PICTURES DONE WITH A QUILL.

PICTURES DONE WITH A QUILL.

I.

DUMBLEDOWNDEARY.

DOWN in the pleasant Kentish county, where there are hops, and apples, and ruddy women; where an unobtrusive little railway runs through luscious orchards of pears and cherries, and gooseberry-bushes so overburdened with juicy fruit as to require little crutches for the support of the laden branches; where fat little meadows, in which fat cattle graze, are intersected by those green lanes so pleasant to the English eye, and which you will find in no other country save this our England; where all day long "the lyric choristers," as good Master Donne calls them—"the lyric lark, the grave whispering dove, and the household bird with the red stomacher," are blithe subscribers to Nature's great Sacred Harmonic Society; where there are May meetings of bees, humming and buzzing quite as much (and quite as profitably, perhaps) as some of your London May-meeters; where, mount to whatever eminence you will, the horizon bounds for you on every side one great English garden, with the river Thames, innocent of dead dogs hereabout, running through the midst—down in this pleasant-smiling land, where you could almost imagine that such things as poor-rates are unknown (but they are not), I light upon a town. A little town it is, though of

considerable pretensions—a town that means to do a great deal some day, but has not done much yet—an embryo town grown out of an obsolete village—a baby town in brick long-clothes, with a bedridden old grandfather dozing in a cottage by the river-side. Shall I be accused of personality if I call it Dumbledowndeary? I hope not.

My town, like Beau Brummel's valet, has had its failures. It is on the famous Thames river, and tried hard, once, to be a watering-place. It came out with a pier, a Pier Hotel, a bazaar, and a pleasure-garden; but the soil, I suppose, was not favourable to the growth of shrimps, crusty bread and butter, donkeys, circulating libraries, and other productions of a quasi-marine watering-place; and it came to naught. There is nothing but a blurred bill pasted on a pump to tell of the bazaar that was; the steamboat, though it still calls at the pier-head, takes up and lands but very few passengers; and the Pier Hotel has been numbered long since in the great category of "houses to let."

Dumbledowndeary afterwards tried the coal trade, which showed a sanguine and commerce-loving temperament on the part of its inhabitants; but as there were no coal-fields in the neighbourhood and very few coal purchasers (the bulk of the population preferring to use as fuel sticks from the hedges, portions of barges past service, and any stray bits of their own houses or furniture that came handy), the import and export trade in black diamonds never became very brisk. A timid little collier loiters about an out-of-the-way creek sometimes, but she never seems to load or to discharge cargo; and in the window of the grocer's shop (which also serves as a post-office) you may see, from month's end to month's end, faded letters addressed to collier captains, which letters have been there so long, and have grown so yellow and so fly-blown, that I am inclined to think the commanders to whom they are addressed must all be first cousins or bosom friends of Captain Vanderdecken, and have never been able to double the Cape yet to come and fetch them.

These, with a frantic though puny attempt to do something in

the boat and barge-building line, and an important plunge into the mash-tub, with a view to the brewing of strong ale, have been among the failures of Dumbledowndeary.

Suddenly, however, she (Dumbledowndeary) had a mission. Everybody has a mission now-a-days—actors, authors, commercial travellers—and my town had *hers*. She discovered that her mission was bricks. The Dumbledowndearians threw themselves upon bricks with an ardour and an intensity of purpose really surprising; and it is doubtless due to their extensive operations and speculations in bricks that there are so many brick-fields and so many brick-barges in Dumbledowndeary—so many brick-makers, bricklayers, and bargees—and more especially that Dumbledowndeary may be called, without much exaggeration, a Town to Let.

Before I treat of the yet infant town, I may be allowed to take a bird's-eye view of the ancestor of this brick-baby, the *old* town, or rather village, of Dumbledowndeary. It is not extensive. It has no market-place, parks, squares, or fountains, nor has it, with the exception of a church, a charity-school, and a cage, any public buildings. It has a "common hard," a straggling street, a back lane, and there an end. Public-houses are pretty numerous. There is no gas out of doors. There are three policemen, who appear to pass their time in the consumption of tea under the shadow of their sergeant, or in inviting him, in rotation, to the same social meal. These members of the force are all, I opine, modest and reserved men, adverse to mixing much in public. I have, indeed, never set eyes upon one of them during a fortnight's sojourn; but, as I occasionally see a little chubby boy, three years old, with whom I have a pat-on-the-head acquaintance, riding cock-horse to Coventry on a formidable-looking cutlass with a brass hilt, which he says is "father's," I conjecture that the police are accustomed to the use of weapons; and that, although addicted to the cultivation of the household virtues, they are ready to sally forth and do terrific execution when they are wanted (which they very seldom seem to be) and when Dumbledowndeary and the rest of England expect them to do their duty.

The architecture of Dumbledowndeary is peculiar. Plumb-lines, levels, and squares were unknown when it was built; and the houses seem to have grown rather like pollard willows and gnarled oaks with windows in them, than to have risen by the legitimate agency of scaffold-poles, trowels, and hods of mortar. Timber, lath and plaster, thatch, and an anomalous composition, in which mud, shingles, rushes, and fragments of tile are visible to the naked eye, appear to form the principal materials of which the queer little houses—half-cottage, half-barn—are composed. There is no pavement, and the roadway itself is distressingly eccentric, now sinking so low as to require an embankment on either side for the footway, now rising so pretentiously that the houses seem to be in danger of being swallowed up, causing the first floor fronts to be in the area, and the soles of the by-passer's boots nearly on a level with the garret windows. Window sashes are unknown, and the picturesque little lozenges of bottle-glass, fertile in bull's eyes, are still in vogue. Chimney-pots sprout up indifferently, not necessarily on the roof, but wherever it has been found convenient to make a fire-place and an aperture for the smoke. Knockers to the doors there are none, and—seeing that doors themselves are not numerous, and that three-fourths of the male population and the whole of the female and infant population ditto are always loitering in the doorways or sprawling amicably in that part of the road where there should be a gutter, but there isn't—where would be the use of knockers, I should like to know?

It is a pretty sight, on a fine afternoon, to peep through one of these doorways, and catch the Dumbledowndearians in the full luxuriance of their *ménage*, which serves them for "kitchen and parlour and all;" three generations enjoying their family souchong or serviceable bohea. A grizzled old grandfather, eighty years old perhaps, so bent and twisted by the "rheumatis" that he cannot have seen his shoes or the ribbons at the knees of his small-clothes for a score of years; a hale husband, the bread-winner of the family, just come home from the brickfield, very clayey and strawy, enjoying a basin of tea and a pipe of tobacco

an amalgamated refreshment somewhat distasteful, it may be, to cockneys, but than which country people and travellers in Australia will tell you there are few things more grateful and refreshing; a comely wife (with the arm of Milo for cutting bread and butter), and a whole tribe of ruddy children, varying in size and stature like the row of stewpans ranged in a large kitchen.

Talk about political economy—what sort of economy can it be that out of sorry and precarious wages can give the grizzled old grandfather his snuff and his beer, the sturdy brickmaker his bacon, the tribe of little children clean pinafores unconscious of tatters and hobnailed shoes with whole soles, can fill their little bellies with bread and butter, can give them each the weekly twopence for their instruction at school; can keep up the subscription to the burial club and father's lodge of Foresters, or Druids, or Shepherds; can even, on high days and holidays, enable mother to astonish the Dumbledowndearians in a bonnet—a marvellous bonnet of white chip with rainbow ribbons—and a parasol as green as a gooseberry?

All these things are done; but *how* are they managed? What subtleties of finance, what Machiavelic evolutions of domestic diplomacy must be resorted to to give all these young ravens their food, all these little foxes their holes, all these babies their raiment? To be sure, father has his beer at home instead of going to the "Cross Keys," the "Traveller's Joy," or the "Jolly Brickmakers" for it, and water is good and plentiful in Dumbledowndeary, and the inhabitants seem to be naturally fond of washing themselves and each other; so there may be something in that.

Dumbledowndeary does not possess a public promenade, although its environs afford the most beautiful walks to be found anywhere, perhaps, in England. Within the walls the lounger is confined to the common hard I have named, and to a little quay commanding at low water, and in calm weather, nothing more picturesque in the way of a view than a considerable expanse of mud, the flat shores of the opposite Essex coast, the phantom collier playing at loading ballast, and one or two cutter yachts belonging to "city men," who take an occasional holiday from

consols for account and bills payable, to run social little matches for snuff-boxes and silver mugs from Dumbledowndeary to the Nore, and whose crews (one man and a boy, I think, to each yacht) appear to me to have no duties more arduous to perform than to scrape carrots for their *pot-au-feu* and to polish the masts and bowsprit with bees'-wax. But at high water, in fine weather, and above all in fresh breezy weather, you shall see a sight from Dumbledowndeary's shabby little quay, that I, for one, would not change for any number of Panoramas of the Mississippi—nay, nor for Venice, the Golden Horn, or the Bay of Naples.

For then you shall see the highway of nations and of the world thick-sown with winged carriages. The great Canadian timber ships, the humble colliers, smacks, and hoys, by fleets; the portly steamers bound for Antwerp and Hamburg, puffing and blowing as though conscious of their importance in society; the screw steamers, whose long, low black hulks and flaunting ensigns at the main tell them to be Government vessels from Woolwich Dockyard, fresh from the study of steam and the ironing and mangling of their boilers and machinery, and which glide sinuously and quietly (though with a vicious twist) through the maze of vessels; and, for all their smooth ebony sides, could show some sharp and ugly teeth, and scream and bellow as other vixens do upon emergency. Vixenish names have they, too, these little war-steamers—"Scourges," or "Spitefuls," or "Spitfires," or "Retaliations." They forage cunningly all over the world, poking their sharp noses into out-of-the-way ports and harbours—bringing home African kings with more epaulette than broadcloth—taking out useful presents to uncivilised nations: such as baby-jumpers, Revalenta Arabica, and ministers plenipotentiary—landing lieutenant-governors on uninhabited islands, and consuls-general at tiger-frequented jungles—and ever and anon kicking up a terrible dust on some imperfectly known coast, with a king and people seldom heard of, and to avenge some inexplicable national wrongs: all of which invariably end, though, by a list of killed and wounded (mostly on the unknown side), and a declaration of prize-money by some patriotic navy agent in a

street out of the Strand, by which is adjudicated to "flag" two or three hundred pounds, or a trifle of that sort, and to "thirteenth class" something like one and tenpence halfpenny. *I* would rather be a "flag."

Also, in fine weather and in summer, besides shoals of pleasure-boats on this same water, you see the Gravesend steamers, rather uncomfortably crowded, on their way to "Townpier Terrace or Rosherville" (pronounced *Ros*erville). Popular melodies float gently through the summer air, and on your quay at Dumbledowndeary you have, in addition to the opportunity for improvement in the Euterpean art, the gratification of being exempted from the periodical visits of the trombone player on board, from whom few men can withhold halfpence, or, withholding, can bear the glance of deadly meaning that, during the remainder of the voyage, darts from his (slightly bleary) eye. Finally, the great river Yacht Clubs, the clubs that have commodores, and costly cups and purses of sovereigns for prizes, do not disdain Dumbledowndeary as a starting-place, nor, returning thither when the battle has been lost and won, do they refuse to refresh themselves at the "Lee Scupper," which is *the* yachting house.

Mighty dinners are cooked here; great toasts are given and responded to; fierce arguments take place as to whether the Grampus ran foul of the Solan, or the Seagull can go closer into the wind's eye than the Waterduck; guns are discharged, shouts rend the air, and many men and many boys, the crews of many yachts, are wheeled, towards midnight, down the common hard on barrows to where their boats await them. Then the rejoicings terminate. The yacht owners—from formidable-looking mariners in alarming pea-coats and glazed hats, with eye-glasses, telescopes, and a slight perfume of tar, full of brave words of belaying and heaving to, smoking short pipes to a maritime degree of blackness—subside into quiet, clean-shaven stockbrokers or merchants, as the case may be, go back to town by train, and leave their crews, once more, to scrape their masts and carrots and leave Dumbledowndeary to solitude and bricks. And as yet I have unwarrantably neglected bricks, by the bye!

I don't mean the bricks in the brickfield, exactly—long avenues of cubes of grayish clay, called "clamps," with heaps of straw between; heaps of broken bricks spoiled in the making or the baking; smoking kilns, with glowing masses of burning cinders and "breeze" within, whose caloric is gradually doing the bricks to a turn, giving them, though, ere they attain the orthodox hue of dark red or yellow suitable to a well-done brick fit to be cemented, a thousand rainbow hues of crimson, and chrome, and purple; the mighty brickstacks thatched in like wheat or hay, and awaiting purchase or removal. I don't mean the bricks which the toiling workmen are moulding in iron cubes; the rude masses of clay and sand which the children are kneading into useful dirt pies, ready for the finishing touch of the brick-maker; the women, wheeling barrows of earth and ashes; the burners, stackers, or carters.

The bricks I mean, and to which I would desire to call your attention, have, though contiguous to the brickfield and owing their very existence to its beneficent soil, no connection with it now. For with the aid of mortar, "compo," and cement, lath and plaster, carpenter and joiner's work, rule, bevel, and square, they have become houses. Scarcely have you escaped from the old-fashioned little village with its lean-to roof, its thatch and lead-paned casements, ere a little Babylon of bricks stares you in the face: streets, terraces, rows, gardens (brick ones), crescents, lodges, villas, squares, groves, cottages, all in brick. The Royal Family of this island, the victories won under the meteor flag of Britain, have given their names or have stood sponsors willingly to these little red and yellow strangers. Miniature conservatories, lilliputian bow-windows, infinitesimal area-railings, microscopic street-doors with knockers to match, baby-house bells, dwarf-house garden entrances, are in abundance. All is very complete, though very small. There is an exceptional foot-pavement, gas-lamps of exquisite symmetry, corner-posts rigidly spiked *à la* Burton Crescent.

I have no doubt that the view of the river and surrounding country is beautiful from all the front and back windows;

that water is plentifully laid on; that the fire-places and kitchen fixtures possess all the latest improvements; that this little paradise of bricks offers every element of felicity for a whole town-load of small families. I can fancy the lilac and geranium and mignonette smelling sweetly in the little front gardens; lusty cabbages and bold-faced cauliflowers in the back ditto; jocund young butchers pulling their fast-trotting ponies short up opposite the street doors; insinuating bakers, whispering flowery nothings to rosy cooks at the area railings; smiling tax collectors, with fat little red books, knocking at all the doors and never having to knock twice; pleasant caps and ribbons enshrining pretty matrons' faces at the first-floor windows; virtuous tenants, with salaries varying from one hundred to two hundred and fifty pounds a-year, working very hard all day in London, then hastening by the rail to their well-beloved Brick Edens at Dumbledowndeary; the pavement chequered with parasols, chubby legs, go-carts, and little dogs; little masters and misses, preternaturally inducted into the mysteries of Bradshaw and railway time-bills, and knowing to a second what time papa's train is due; a pleasant odour of baby, and flowers, and home, and dinner ready precisely at half-past five o'clock. I can fancy all these things, I say; but——

But! ah, fatal word! ah, woeful pivot on which all things human turn! Nobody lives, alas! in these pretty little houses; there is no population for these cleanly, fresh-coloured, airy little streets and terraces. The surveyor's ban, the anathema maranatha of the house-agent is upon them all. "These Houses are to be Let or Sold;" and nobody comes to hire or to purchase them. The cosy little windows are besmeared with the dread announcement in whitewash; rude bills to the same effect are posted on the street doors; tall posts with placards, like gibbets, rear their ugly heads where rose-trees and laburnum ought to grow. Dumbledowndeary is a Town to Let.

No butchers pull up their fast-trotting ponies, no bakers whisper flowery nothings; for there are no joints to be ordered and no loaves to be delivered. Spikes are useless to the posts,

for there are no boys to "over" them. The foot-pavement is a work of supererogation, for there are no passengers to tread it; the tramps and agricultural labourers preferring to walk in the road. There are no nursemaids, and no babies to nurse; no youthful students of railway time-bills, for there is no papa's train due. Dumbledowndeary is another name for desolation. The spider has not woven her web, nor does the owl shriek through these deserted halls, as the Eastern poet informs us they were in the habit of doing abroad; but there is desolation notwithstanding.

Next to a house long inhabited and then deserted, a house never tenanted, almost new, yet old in solitude, is the most melancholy house I know. The mortar scarcely dried, the paper on the walls yet fresh, the fire-place unconscious of fire, the chimneys innocent of smoke, the staircases untrodden by domesticated feet, the bedrooms unslept in, the dining-rooms undined in, the doors into which no bride has entered, out of which no coffin has passed: the house unsanctified by the smiles and tears, the pickles and preserves, the sweets and sours, that go to make up the leaven of humanity. And yet to be let or sold, year after year, with nobody to bid! Such is Dumbledowndeary.

Unless somebody comes to take it, it will fall to ruin through sheer desuetude. An uncut cheese will grow musty; the dress too long secluded in a drawer will become moth-eaten. The whitewash must be effaced from its window-panes, the bills torn down, the ugly gibbets levelled. Even a succession of bad tenants, running away on the eve of quarter-day without paying their rent, and carrying off the lead piping and brass door-handles with them, would be better than none. They would be something in the way of a house-warming. They would oil the hinges of the area gates and refresh the knockers and bells. They would brush up the front gardens (even though the flowers were never paid for), and take from them the doleful aspect they have now —an aspect generally resembling a portion of a stonemason's yard run to seed in a pigless pigstye, littered with fragments of

scaffold-poles, chips of dried mortar, broken brickbats, clay pipes of bygone bricklayers, strands of decayed ropes, and the ghost of a trowel.

The truth is, that the good people of Dumbledowndeary have, in the articles of bricks, houses, and tenants to inhabit them, occupied themselves rather too much with the question of supply, without quite enough regarding the question of demand. Seduced by the mammoth London up the line, and the smaller but still vigorous leviathan in miniature, Gravesend, down the line; dazzled by Greenwich, getting bigger and bigger every day; forgetful of the ominous example of that city of unfulfilled promises, Herne Bay; they have dabbled in houses as stock-jobbers dabble in shares. They have projected streets with people to inhabit them, as, during the railway mania, lines were projected to carry passengers where there were no passengers to be carried, and to traffic where there was no commerce. They would have a metropolis when, as yet, their ancient village had no suburbs. They would build their Rome in half a day. They have laid out their capital in bricks, and seem to draw but sorry interest (to say nothing of a bonus) therefrom. There is not a door-knocker in this woe-begone little town to let but what seems to me muffled in bank-notes. The deserted parlours are papered with transfer tickets. The stair-carpets (where there are any) should be of Exchequer bills. The whole town seems to me one grim brick mausoleum of dead capital—a tomb erected to the sinking funds of Dumbledowndeary.

If the Dumbledowndearians had looked at home, they would have built one-storey cottages, or large houses, if you will, divided into little tenements fit for the occupancy of the poor brick-makers, and bargees, and labourers who swelter in crowded kennels in the back lanes and narrow alleys of the village—paying rents, too, which would secure them clean, wholesome, airy lodgings elsewhere. But no, the Dumbledowndeary capitalists must needs build villa residences; the lord of the manor has said nay to small tenements. The rents demanded are from twenty-five to thirty-five pounds a year, of which none avail themselves;

while the brick-makers and bargees, who could, and who do, pay four and five shillings a week for their styes, can't move into better houses because there are none built for men of their degree. They *should* have looked at home, you say; but, alas! who can—who does? I say again. Hearken to Doctor Goldsmith, writing wisdom, among the beggars of Axe Lane perchance. "Were I to be angry with men for being fools," he says, "I could here find ample room for declamation; but, alas! I have been a fool myself; and why should I be angry with them for being something so natural to every child of humanity?" Let us hope that Dumbledowndeary, the rashly-built, will no longer lack tenants, and that it will not always be a town to let.

We go for a walk out of Dumbledowndeary. We leave the church on our right, cross the railway by a pretty bridge, close to which a large railway hotel has driven away the orchards and gooseberry bushes which two years before flourished in its place, and plunge into a sweet-smelling, shadowy lane. Mine host of the Railway Hotel is with us, a cheerful man and portly, who sings a song and does not despair of Dumbledowndeary yet. He carries a lantern; I carry a lantern; Mr. Caps, the gamekeeper, who has started up somehow from somewhere, in a velveteen frock and leather gaiters, carries a lantern. "What is this for?" you ask, seeing that it is yet broad day. "We are going to see the lion of Dumbledowndeary, the wonder, and terror, and admiration thereof. We are bound on a voyage of discovery to a haunted house—a house that has been nailed and boarded up since the battle of Waterloo, and which must be consequently rather dark and gloomy inside."

Now, if you be anything of an amateur in haunted houses, a connoisseur in domestic ghosts, you will, doubtless, begin to form in imagination some very charming pictures of Elizabethan chambers, mouldy tapestry, and a stain of blood on the oak flooring which all the scrubbing and washing, the scouring, scraping, and planing in the universe, will not efface. You will be disappointed. You will at least conjure up a house of passable antiquity, dating from Queen Anne's reign, we will say. You

will again be disappointed. Passing through a beautiful park, and over what was once a lawn, but is now ploughed up and sown with wheat, you come suddenly on a substantial brick mansion, so fresh, so neat, so comfortable in appearance, that, but for the doorstep overgrown with weeds, the heavy chains and padlocks on the gates, and a dismal screen of planking before every window, you would take it to be in full occupancy now. In good sooth, it has not been built more than seventy years; and Mr. Caps's father-in-law, an apple-cheeked veteran, some ninety odd, helped to make the bricks from which the house was built. It belongs to the lord of the manor; it has been shut up nearly forty years, and it is haunted.

These bald and unsatisfactory fragments are its whole history. The very ghost of Dumbledowndeary is a disappointment. There is no authenticated legend of a spectre in a white sheet, of an apparition carrying its head under its arm—no deaths'-heads, no cross-bones, no blood, no groans. Everybody agrees, though, that it is haunted. Mr. Caps's father-in-law says that there were "noises" heard in the year '32. Mr. Caps, the game-keeper, has himself heard "noises." "Were they ghosts?" we ask, breathlessly. Mr. Caps scratches the knee of his corduroys, and says simply, "Poachers." Even as we wait for his answer a pheasant gets up with a whirr near us, and we shudder.

Mr. Caps, who is master of the ceremonies *pro tem.*, has the key of the haunted mansion with him, and we enter. We pass through room after room, dark and sombre, in which our lanterns conjure up fantastic, Rembrandt-like effects. We see the gay paper torn from the walls, and the flooring gradually yielding to the dry rot—the nests which the jackdaws have built in the fire-places. Now and then mine host punches out a plank from the window with his walking-stick, and shows us a glorious view of the country-side. We descend into the kitchens, stumbling over a decapitated rabbit at the stair-head; we sigh over the mighty kitchen range, where the mark of the meat-jack still shows on the mantel-side; we peep into the larder, where the ropes to which the joints were hung still remain: into the

scullery, the deserted wine-cellars—the bins looking like the shelves in a vault. The house is young and lusty, and strongly built—why should it go thus to decay? Mine host whispers something about the battle of Waterloo, and the lawyers, and the long minority of the young lord. So we extinguish our lanterns in the entrance-hall, thinking that when the house is occupied again the spell may be taken off Dumbledowndeary, and it may be no longer a town to let.

Small as the commerce of Dumbledowndeary may be, it is amazingly fertile and successful in one respect—in ghosts! There is the vaguely-haunted house to begin with. There is Lady Raff, who lies in marble in the church, but who was accustomed to ride nightly (headless, of course) in a coach and four round about Hollyhill House. All the navvies saw her while making the railroad, which accounts for their obstinately refusing to work after sundown, and drinking till past two in the morning at the "Bull and Bagpipes." Happily, she is laid in the Red Sea now, the Dumbledowndearians averring that it took thirteen clergymen to perform the operation, and that she is laid for "as long as oak an' ash grows." There is another ghost, by the way, who was only laid for ten years and a day, and as his time is nearly up, may be expected shortly. There is the legend—which no true Dumbledowndearian dare gainsay—of a demon chicken always running before you at night, which you may fall over, twist the neck of even, occasionally, but which still continues to run. There is a white rabbit, with never a head, which leaps palings in an astonishing manner. There was "Toby Munns afore he was drownded," who, being of a loose and dissipated habit, met his mother (dead half-a-dozen years before) "full butt" in the back lane, and, going on board his barge, said to his mate, "Bill, I'm done;" then, going up the river to St. Katharine's Docks with a cargo of bricks, *was* "drownded" accordingly.

There is the undoubtedly true legend of Jack Cripps and the snake. How Jack Cripps saw the snake crawl from the churchyard into his mother's house; how it changed into a cat and

jumped out of the window; and how Jack Cripps thereupon went "off his head," or stark-staring mad, and is now in a lunatic asylum at Barnardo Heath, which is indeed an additional confirmation of the story. Teddy Beadle, the bargee, has seen scores of ghosts; one that unaccountably sunk into the pavement close by a gas-lamp at Woolwich; one that struck three distinct blows on his shoulder "as he was a-smoking his pipe aboard, going with ashes to Peckham." Teddy Beadle is, indeed, the hereditary ghost-seer of Dumbledowndeary. None of his family ever "died in their bed," he says, and he supposes he sha'n't. "Drownded" is the lamentable summary of all his ancestors' careers.

II.

A POODLE AT THE PROW.

"I KNOW," he seemed to say, "that four-leggedness is at a discount in this amphibious place. I am aware that Lord Byron is dead, and that nobody since his lordship's time has ridden a horse along the Riva degli Schiavoni. I have been told by an uncle of mine that in the last century the idea, in the superlatively sarcastic degree, of a sinecure, was that of Master of the Horse to the Chief of the late Republic. I apprehend that the old lion on the pillar yonder, and on the myriad bas-reliefs, brooches, and panels in mosaic and fresco besides, was furnished with wings through a preconceived conviction on the part of his designers that legs could be of no possible use to him. I grant that I might be more welcome were I a dolphin or a mermaid, or a Nereid or a Triton, or something scaly, or watery, or finny. At all events, the force of circumstances has driven me here. Let me put in a plea in favour of the four-legged creation. You won't see many quadrupeds during your stay in these parts. I will walk on my hind legs, if you insist upon it, but don't utterly disdain my fore-paws. Mayn't I come too?"

There was no refusing a poodle so remarkably well-behaved and so scrupulously clean-shaven. He had an insinuating way about him that disarmed objection. Grave yet urbane, learned yet devoid of pedantry, polite but not servile, he was a pattern to all possible poodles. Pray understand, to begin with, that he was not a Frenchman. I was rashly about to address him as Monsieur, but haply reflected, and, accosting him as Signore, asked him when

he was last at Bologna? No grinning, chattering, moping, mowing Parisian mountebank was he. His ears and tail gave emphasis to the parlance of his eyes, but in gesticulation he never indulged. There was nothing theatrical, nothing tawdry in his appearance or demeanour. They have gotten a dreadful habit in the French capital of staining their poodles all over with sky-blue or rose-pink. Had this Italian poodle been subjected to such an affront he would have died, I believe.

Yes; he was a scholar and a gentleman. He took every morning, it was easy to notice, his salt-water bath, then had a douche of the warm, soft fresh, and was ultimately lathered with fine soap, and shaved. His frills, and tuckers, and whiskers remaining after the application of the razor, were not crisped and pinched into impertinent and obtrusive *gauffres*, but hung in soft and flossy curls, the Order of the Snowy Fleece, about him. His shaven parts blushed with a delicate creamy carnation. He had never had sore eyes. His nose only seemed to have been tipped with a little patent blacking. His nails were beautifully pared, filbert fashion. For all ornament he had a slender collar of blue silk fastened with a golden shell. He had a gentle way of pattering about, and hesitating when he found his front paw on a slippery part of the boat. He had a persuasive way of wagging, or rather of mildly undulating, his tufted tail. No violence, no haste, no irrational uncertainty, but a deliberate, well-weighed expression of complacency. Had the old lion on the pillar wagged *his* tail he could not have done it more majestically. At a glance you saw this poodle to be intelligent, well-educated, and refined—a poodle that had seen men, if not cities, and marked their ways.

He was larger than the ordinary run of poodles, but an inch shorter than a remarkable specimen of the breed in question I once knew, called Neno. *He* was from Bergamo. He visited this country in 1859, but getting into some trouble through a whimsical habit of pulling off people's hats in Hyde Park, and throwing them into the Serpentine, he was compelled to return to the Continent. He subsequently joined the army, and has now, I

believe, the honour of marching at the head of the Hundred and First Regiment of the Line.

I knew this present poodle to be an animal, a brute beast, soulless and futureless; at least my miserable human conceit taught me thus to regard him. He had no reason, of course; only instinct. He could know no pleasures beyond the gratification of his sensual appetites. And yet, all brute as he was, he did not look like a poodle that would over-eat himself. He was, patently, a total abstainer from intoxicating liquors. He was a brute, but he didn't bark at passing strangers; and from the little I saw of him on dry land he was not prone to associate with low dogs.

It was very strange and very irreverent, and a vagabond kind of thought altogether, but the more I considered him the more I grew to deem that, to be complete, he ought to have a pair of gold-rimmed spectacles across his nose, a neatly-puckered frill with a diamond brooch in his bosom, a snuff-box or a golden-headed cane in one paw, and a sprinkling of hair-powder on his pate. Thus accoutred, he would have been to me the image of a grave, wise, cultivated physician of the old school—no solemn humbug, no voluble quack, but a sapient, polished medico. The illusion was enhanced by the fact of there being at the corner of the canal, where I took oars, a cool and shady chemist's shop; and I fancied that he had been writing prescriptions in the pharmacy, and had now come out for a mouthful of the sea breeze, or to see a patient at the Giudecca. He was not, however, attached to the compounder of drugs. He was the friend and Mentor of the boatman I had just engaged. He, the boat, and the boatman belonged to each other, and made up one harmonious whole. As I have noted, he appeared, as a matter of courtesy, to ask my permission to be of the party for a stroll on the Canalazzo; and that being granted, he tripped blithely over the bulwarks from the marble landing-stairs to the carpeted keelson, and was of us directly.

"*Alci, qui?*" said the boatman.

Observe, that to the "qui" I have appended a note of interrogation. The inflection of the boatman's tone justifies me in the

act. It was not a brutal command—a savage "come here!" It was a kindly query as to where he intended to sit. "Qui" meant the afterpart, behind my cabin. The poodle did not shake his head. Instinct did not go so far as that; but his tail deflected in the wag negative. He elected to sit at the prow, and at that carved and fiddle-headed promontory he took his station, immediately over against the bench where I was reclining. The boatman called him "Alci," whence I conjectured that the poodle's name was Alcibiades.

The waterside in England is associated with noise, scurrility, and extortion. The waterman you have hired makes up his mind to cheat you. The Tom Tugs who have failed in securing you curse their colleague and his fare as the wherry pushes off. You depart from a shore of mud, ordure, broken bottles, and fragments of pottery. Abroad, even, I have found the canotiers at Asnières a ruffianly crew, and the red-shirted and bearded Charons who ferry you over the Neva little better than savages. Here we went off in cheerful tranquillity. In a place where everybody *must* take a boat competition is robbed of its feverish fierceness. If it be Giacomo's turn this time, it will be Paolo's within five or ten minutes. Extortion does not obtain to any great extent. You cannot be ten minutes in the city without somebody telling you that the water-fare for the first hour (single-oared) is a franc, and for every succeeding hour half that sum, and that for five francs you may have the boat and boatman for the entire day. As for the extra gratuity, the "buonamano," a couple of soldi will suffice, and a hundred soldi go to a florin.

The only little "pull" possessed by the boatman lies in the franc in these latitudes being an imaginary coin, and in the quarter-florin, which he tells you is worth only half a franc, representing about a third more. Altogether, the financial state of things is curious. You see in actual circulation nothing but Austrian florins, zwanzigers, kreuzers, and soldi; but the accounts are all kept in francs and centimes—the Italian lire and centesimi. In adopting this mode of reckoning, perhaps, the people cherish a mournful chimera that they have still some kind of union with the

beloved and distant land—the land beyond the lagunes and the Qudrilateral—the land where human speech and action are free—the land where Victor Emmanuel, the fighting king who tells no lies, reigns by the grace of God and the national will, over twenty-two millions of Italians who can call their souls their own.*

Back, then, I stretched myself upon the cushions in full enjoyment of the long-desired at-last-attained haven; and the poodle sat outside the door, calmly contemplating me, his wise head a little on one side. No Mordecai in the gate he, full of minatory remonstrance; the rather, a cheerful harbinger, a pleasant cicerone, an obliging gentleman usher, murmuring, "Welcome to the wonderful city that is moored on the bosom of the salt, salt sea." "Poodle," I said, "you and the boatman shall be my guides to-day, and I will have no other. Into the hands of the abhorred *valet de place* I know that sooner or later I must fall. He has been looming in handbooks and continental Bradshaws these ten days past.

"I was threatened with him at the railway station, just as I stepped into the omnibus. The omnibus is a boat—a shabby Bucentaur. He flitted through the vestibule of the Hotel Victoria, and the waiter had all but consigned me to his custody, when I declared that, for one day at least, I would go out alone. I see him smirking at me now from every pair of water-stairs: rings in his ears, a pink umbrella under his arm, expectant. His little brown brats at home may have but a meagre mess of maize pottage for dinner to-day, but he will say to them, 'Rejoice, my children. To-morrow we devour an Englishman!' He is waiting for me, I am certain, in St. Mark's Place, calmly confident that I cannot do without him. It is only a question of time. I have a shivering foreknowledge of what he will show me, and what he will tell me about the Golden Staircase, and the Hall of the Ambassadors, and the veiled niche where Marino Faliero's picture should be, and the Dogana, and the Bridge of Sighs. Not to-day, oh *valet de place!* I ask but for twenty-four hours' grace, and then I will go into leading-strings with the alacrity of a fool

* Written in 1866, before Venice had been ceded to Italy.

going to the correction of the stocks. Let me have but this one day with the poodle at the prow, and let us 'do' Venice for ourselves."

In this city of a hundred and seventy-five thousand inhabitants I did not know one living soul. Does it matter, when every instant you can commune with millions of the mighty dead? In a churchyard you seldom feel lonely. You can almost dispense with the clergyman's white pony, quietly browsing on parishioners that have sprouted up into salad. The dead by daylight are not such very bad company. If their tombstones lie, you can gird at them for their fibbing, and they have never a word to answer. You can pick out some truthful tombs now and then, of good old dames and yeomen who in their lives-time you feel sure were friendly, and merry, and single-hearted. Beyond a poodle, you require nothing more that has life in it, during your first day in Venice. For a season turn away from the quick. This place belongs to the dead. The dead alive, the modern Venetians, have buried their dead-departed—their history, their wealth, their happiness, their love, in stately mausoleums of many-coloured marbles. These sepulchres are not whited. They have the reverent hue of age. Time has beaten upon them with his wing, and the strong pinion has worn down the sharp edges and blunted the chisel's fine tracery; but the marble is, after all, too hard for his scythe, and Time hacks at the palaces in vain.

I lighted a cigarette, and was lazy, and not ashamed of myself: activity would be almost a crime in this voiceless city. Industry! —where was the use of being industrious? People don't come here to work, but to idle. From the loom there hangs a gorgeous piece of Venice stuff, cunningly 'broidered, shot with gold and silver thread. But it is a fragment, rent and frayed. Warp and woof are tarnished and faded. And the loom is motionless, and the shuttle flies no more, and the weaver has sickened and died.

Thus having comfortably settled myself, and in reply to the boatman's inquiry as to whither I wished to be conducted having informed him that my view did not extend beyond a "piccolo giro" of an hour's duration—in other words, that he might go

anywhere he liked about Venice, which he construed into a stroll from the Palazzo Corner to the Rialto and back again—I had full leisure to inspect the apartment of which I had become a denizen. The worst of the matter is, that in presuming to say anything about Venice you can scarcely, if you have any modesty left about you, avoid a sensation of nervous shame lest what you are saying should have been said by ten thousand persons in terms analogous, if not identical, ten thousand times before.

For instance, is there, can there be, anything new in the way of description to be written about the interior of a gondola? The gondola is your first acquaintance in Venice, and it is your last. It brings you from the railway terminus to your hotel on your arrival, and it takes you to the rail or the steamer when you depart; consequently the tourist is usually as minute in his notes of its appearance and peculiarities as of that of the packet-ship which conveys him across the Atlantic. The only healing salve I can put to my conscience is this: when you have had a remarkably good dinner—say at Véfour's, or the Four Seasons at Munich—there is, I conceive, no social law against your expatiating on the perfection of the bill of fare and the wine card on the morrow, although good dinners are given and good *gourmêts* dine in the Palais Royal and the Maximilian Strasse every day in the year. A gondola is the first and most delightful dish in the intellectual banquet spread out, in permanence, on the Adriatic Sea; why, then, should not I descant on its aspect, just as I might lovingly dwell on the Charlotte or the Suprême I tasted yesterday?

The outward gondola—the boat itself—it would be impertinent to describe. See Turner, see Roberts, see Stanfield, see Cooke, see Holland, see Pyne, see Carl Haag, see Finden's tableaux, see Heath's Landscape Annual, see the delightful pictures of Mr. John Rogers Herbert before he took to painting St. Lawrence on the gridiron and St. Bartholomew being flayed alive. For the gondolas of the past, see Canaletto. The only quarrel I have with the admirable artists just named—always excepting Antonio da Canal, who never gave vent to his imagination, and if he saw dirt and ugliness in Venice, painted the dirty and the ugly in

rude juxtaposition to the pure and beautiful—is in the persistency with which they strive to make stay-at-home Englishmen believe that gay-coloured gondolas are at all common in Venice. There never was a greater error. Mr. Turner's gondolas were of all the colours of the rainbow. It is true that he might have excused himself on the score that their sides are generally of polished wood, and that his radiant hues were merely the reflection of the sunrise and the sunset. But the tourist who looks for truth knows that the pervading hue of the Venetian gondola is deep funereal black; and that the mortuary appearance of the craft is heightened by the ebony-like carvings, by the metal prow and rullocks which have an odd guise of being made of coffin-plates beaten out, by the brazen knobs and beads and plates on the door, and by the serried rows of black tufts, like sable ostrich plumes stunted in their growth, on the housing over the tilt.

Among five hundred gondolas—there are, it is said, over four thousand in Venice—you may see, perhaps, twenty with brown or blue hulls and with gaily-striped awnings. You may be sure at once that these are not regular Venetian gondolas, and that they are not rowed by regular Venetian gondoliers. When the night comes you shall see whence they spring. You shall find them moored to the yellow and black striped posts of the Austrian domination, and then it shall be revealed to you that they belong to governors-general, military commandants, chiefs of haupt-directoriums, and other yellow-moustached members of the abhorred tribe of Tedeschi. They are manned by pudding-faced men in uniform, no more like gondoliers than I am to Endymion: Carls and Ludwigs, not Giacomos and Paolos. Also shall you see prowling about the water-streets, at all hours of the day and night, barges and cutters belonging to the Austrian war-steamers which are moored off the Arsenal or the island of St. George the Great. There are a great many forts about Venice, and a great many Croat soldiers to garrison them.

The boatmen who go out to sea, who coast along the Adriatic seaboard, and sometimes cross the gulf to the Turkish littoral, are

brightly clad enough, and delight in coloured striped shirts, scarlet and sky-blue caps, sashes, and other accessories of salt-water dandyism. Picturesque and bizarre creatures they still are, bare-footed and open-chested, and they lounge and sprawl and grovel in the most romantic attitudes all about and over St Mark's Place, and the Mole and the Riva, and every inch of quay or stairs that offers room for lazing upon. They are often ragged, but in justice I must admit that they are all very clean, and have a manlier, worthier look than the aquatic scamps who decorate the Chiaja at Naples. Your gondolier is quite another character. I was prepared for all kinds of disappointments in Venice—from the romantic point of view—and underwent, as it turned out, very few; for the real Venice is, to my mind, twenty times more astounding than the ideal one; but I cannot avert the acknowledgment that the actual gondolier is a sad destroyer of illusions. He is not the least like the personage you fondly imagined him to be. His ordinary head covering is a felt hat of the pattern known as wide-awake. He wears no sash. He patronises a shooting-jacket. His pantaloons are by no means out of the common. The sole romantic feature in his attire is a negative one—the general absence of shoes and stockings.

My particular gondolier—he of the poodle—was a dandy; but in what did his dandyism consist? In a laced front to his shirt—such a shirt as I could have purchased for twelve francs fifty in the Passage des Panoramas, Paris—in a resplendent watch-guard, and a bunch of charms. I was wofully disappointed. I turned to the poodle, seeking consolation. He flapped his tail against the prow, with the wag mournful. "What would you have?" he seemed to ask. "Venice is not what it used to be." I turned with a sigh, when a ray of relief shot through me. The gondolier wore a pretty cameo in the band of his wide-awake. That was something. Presently I gave him a cigarette, and thanking me with the frank and dignified courtesy which it strikes me favourably distinguishes the Italians from the French, he inserted my gift in a meerschaum tube with an amber mouth-piece. I am afraid the tube was made at Vienna; but it bore

the Lion of St. Mark carved in the meerschaum, and that was something more.

Goethe fifty years ago, Byron and Rogers forty years ago, noticed that the gondoliers had ceased to sing. They are indeed songless. I never heard when in company with the poodle or elsewhere, any barcaroles, any ritornellas, any recitations from Tasso or Ariosto. The gondolier is, however, by no means mute. He is an exceedingly merry fellow, and for centuries has been renowned as a wag. A thick volume might be collected of the droll sayings of these hansom cabbies of the sea. The stranger, it is true, does not understand much of his facetiæ, for he converses mainly in the soft and flowing Venetian dialect, which dulcifies "padre" into "pare," "madre" into "mare," and abbreviates "casa" to "ca." Then he has his professional gondolier's language, the origin, structure, and syntax of which must alike remain mysterious to those who are not to the Venetian manner born. The most salient points in the vocabulary seemed to me:

First. "Ayéhehi!" This is when he approaches the corner of a canal: it is intended as a warning to any unseen gondolier who may be coming round the said corner.

Next. "Taï!" or "Tahyi!" This is when he has turned the corner, and is an *aviso* to any comrade who is close on his heels.

Last. "Allajevaismayfachayeh-eh-eh!" *ad libitum.* This is a very complex and prolonged sound, like the sweep of an oar, and is employed when a gondolier wishes to cut through a group of boats collected together in order to land. As the cry is prolonged, they divide and allow him to pass. How these sounds are spelt, or what they really mean, I have not the remotest notion; and I question whether the gondoliers themselves are much better informed. It is probable that their forefathers have cried "Ayéhehi," and "Tayhi," and "Allajevaismayfachayeh-eh-eh," ever since the days of blind old Dandolo, if not longer.

Fouling is almost unknown in the navigation of the canals. The gondoliers drive their boats, if the term will be permitted me, with exquisite skill and accuracy. When, in rare instances,

a slight bump occurs, there is a slanging match of moderate intensity between the gondoliers. There is one form of objurgation invariably and plentifully made use of. It is "Figlio di ——" I need not particularise. Have you never observed in what terms of reverential affection foreigners are accustomed to speak of their mothers; and have you never observed how ready they are to take away the characters of other people's mothers when they are quarrelling?

I was Cockney enough, just now, to speak of the gondoliers as the hansom cabbies of the sea. When you have been to Venice, my hypercritical friend, and have gone through your gondola apprenticeship, you may arrive at the confession that between the gondola and the hansom, the gondolier and the cabby, there are many points of similarity. First, in the good driving. Next, in the fact that you don't see the driver, but occasionally hear his witticisms behind you. Thirdly, in your having a look-out straight ahead and side prospects from the two small windows. And lastly, there will scarcely fail to come over you the impression that the gracefully-tapering prow, of which the head, looked straight at, seems no thicker than the blade of a carving-knife, forms, not the end of a boat, but the head and shoulders of a fleet black horse, intelligent, obedient to the will of the charioteer. Only, you never get the charioteer's whip in your face, as is sometimes your misfortune in a hansom.

But the Poodle at the Prow is scanning me reproachfully, and I leave exterior objects to turn to the inside of my gondola. It is two o'clock in the afternoon—I don't mean by Venetian time, which seems to be regulated anyhow—but by my watch, which is set by the meridian of Munich, in Bavaria. It is very hot. By-and-by, at sunset, the sea will be of a deep purple, the sky of an intense azure, but both are now as sheets of burnished gold. But I am as cool as a cucumber inside the gondola. The windows are slightly drawn on one side, and, hot as is the sun, a cool sea-breeze comes stealing through. Ah! that breeze, how well I remember it a week afterwards at Milan, howling in the agonies of the toothache. The cabin of the gondola is a little

black chamber with a high-coved ceiling. It is panelled with rich carved work. There is room in it for three persons to sit at ease on the soft black leather cushions trimmed with black lamb's-wool; but I desire no company. There are a couple of mirrors in carved ebony frames garnished with gilt bosses. The door is a wonder of carved work. There are arm-rests, and leg-rests, and every enticement to be lazy. The transverse bench has a raised and sloping back, like an arm-chair, but the space between that and the tilt is covered only by the pendant portion of the black awning, which you can lift at will, to converse with the gondolier. In one instance only is the sable rule departed from. The carpet, which extends from stem to stern, is of a lively polychromatic pattern.

In winter-time, of course, the cabin-door is shut, the curtains are drawn, a false panel is inserted in the back, and all things are made snug and comfortable. In summer the black awning forms the most delightful of sun-shades. But why is it black? Tell me, Venetian antiquarians. Tell me, chatty correspondents of *Notes and Queries*. I was always given to understand that black absorbed heat, and that white was the only wear for hot climates. I stretched out my arm and touched the roof of the cabin, but it was cool. Do they put saturated felt or wet cloths between it and the awning?

Many travellers, on their first arrival in this enchanted town and in their eager impatience to drink in its beauties, rush from the cabin, and sit or stand in the open in the fore part of the boat, drinking up the glorious perspective which surrounds them. That I think is a mistake. The windows, the open doorway, form *picture frames*, and in those frames are set, in gentle succession, all the marvellous pictures the world has been wondering at for centuries. There is the Grimani Palace, there the Pesaro, there the Vendramin, there the Dogana, there Santa Maria della Salute; there, by Jove! there's the Rialto, which is not unlike the Burlington Arcade on arches. "Signor Antonio, many a time and oft——" but Signor Antonio politely asks me whether we shall turn back, and I say him yea, and bid him land me at the Mole.

All this time the poodle has been regarding, now me, and now the panorama of panoramas on either side. The latter he inspects with an air that is accustomed but not stale. One does not grow tired of Venice. In the cortile of the Ducal Palace you may see the common people eyeing every day, with reverent astonishment ever fresh, the wonderful statues, and friezes, and bas-reliefs. The poodle looked at the palaces as though he were acquainted with them all, but was as fond of them as when he first set eyes on Venice and sat at the prow of a gondola. Oh, poodle, how long? Did he belong to the mainland—was he ever at Bologna? Was he ever——no; I spurn the thought. He could never have been an Austrian poodle. The gondolier would have tipped him into the sea, and held him down with the oar till he was drowned, had the faintest suspicion come across him that Alcibiades was a Tedesco.

The poodle and I and the gondolier came slowly back to the Mole. And there I paid the boatman a little more than his fare, and left him pleased. I shook paws with Alcibiades, and left him pleased too, if the jocund wag of his tail was to be accepted as evidence. I felt that I had made a friend; and solitary travellers are always privileged to form two kinds of friendships. To be on talking terms with dogs and with little children you require no letters of introduction. And then I traversed the Mole, and finding myself between the two great columns guarding the approach to the Piazzetta, with the Doge's palace on one side and the Zecca on the other, I lost my senses at once, and was whirled away into the midst of Venetian life, and was as mad as a March hare for the rest of the week.

THE PIAZZETTA, VENICE.

III.

The Philosophy of Yourself.

CAREFUL mammas are apt to box the ears of little girls who jump up on chairs to look at themselves in the glass—at least careful mammas were wont so to do in the primitive ages, when the ears of little girls could, under any circumstances and for any misdeeds, be boxed at all. But no amount of smarting or smiting can, I take it, cure little girls when grown up of a habit which is as natural to them as that of nursing a doll when they are little. Indeed, I see no valid reason why it should. It is all very well for us grizzled and wrinkled ones, whose good looks are of ante-diluvian date, to inveigh against female vanity, coquetry, display, and the like; but none of our fierce invective will alter the real and immutable state of the case—that it is one of the chiefest points in that "woman's mission" about which so much insupportable clap-trap has been lately said and sung, to look comely and graceful, in order that she may attract men, and in process of time get married, and become the happy mother of blooming children.

Now, this comeliness and gracefulness, if the requirements of civilisation are to be consulted, are unattainable without a mirror. Beauty when unadorned adorned the most, is a charming bit of word jingling; but Cicely Mop the dairymaid, without even a scrap of looking-glass to assist her in parting her hair symmetrically and adjusting her neck-ribbon in a becoming manner, will scarcely persuade Colin Clout the ploughman to ask her to wed. Miss Feejee, the island beauty, may contrive to stick a fish-bone through her nose, and plaster her cheeks and forehead with ochre

and orpiment, without the aid of a toilet mirror; but still she would give her ears for the merest fragment of a ship captain's shaving-glass. Ask the prison matron what is the direst punishment that female convicts have to undergo. She will tell you that it is not low diet, or the dark cells, or even hair-cutting—agonising as the tonsure is. It is *the deprivation of looking-glasses.*

Boys, whose "mission" it is not—or at least it should not be—to fascinate, are not much given to surveying their own reflections in polished surfaces. I did once know a boy at school who was continually staring into a glass; but vanity was not his motive. He was a boy with a rare talent for making grimaces, and being, besides, of an ambitious turn, the notion had grown upon him that he could, by assiduous practice, put his tongue into his ear. He studied this difficult feat with such pertinacity and with such horrible distortions of his facial muscles, that we, his admiring schoolfellows, began to think of lockjaw, and grew alarmed. One of us happened to remember the old story of the madman who, standing at the top window of an asylum with a sane person, remarked what rare sport it would be if he were to fling him out of it; to which the sane person had the sagacity to reply that the sport would be much easier if he, the maniac, would step down to the courtyard and try to jump up to the window. The madman had never thought of that, he said; and stepping down accordingly, was promptly pounced upon and popped into a padded room. Applying this apologue by analogy, the juvenile sage I speak of suggested to the boy who made faces that he would gain everlasting renown if he could only contrive to force his nose into one of his eyes. He tried and failed, naturally, and, falling from the giddy height of his ambition, took a soberer view of things and let his tongue alone for the future.

To sneer at a woman for spending a large proportion of her time at the dressing-table is a fashion as old as envy, malice, and other uncharitableness; but no rational male could be seriously angry with his spouse, or his sister, or his sweetheart, for resorting to the indispensable aid of the mirror towards enhancing her

personal charms. If bonnets ceased to be properly tied and pork-pie hats coquettishly adjusted—if ladies had not looking-glasses to counsel them how much pearl-powder to put on and how much to rub off—there would be an end, I apprehend, to Society. Let me put a case. Have you ever seen a lady come down to dinner, or into the drawing-room to respond to a morning call, with a small circular dab of some floury substance on the tip of her finely-chiselled nose? I have. That farinaceous disc has at once made havoc of all her charms, stultified her jewellery, rendered nugatory all her Maltese lace, deleted her mauve ribbons. The cause of the catastrophe has generally been self-evident. She has completed her toilette in a hurry, and forgotten that last and supreme glance at the looking-glass after applying the powder-puff. There are ladies, you may object, who never use powder. Ask them. Ask the photographers. Ask the chemists and druggists.

The ladies, I am emboldened to hope, will render me a proper meed of gratitude for this candid defence of their right to gaze upon their own sweet reflected images as long and as frequently as ever they please. But I intend to go a step further. Men are given, as a rule, to look with aversion and contempt on members of their own sex who habitually take counsel of the looking-glass. When I was a little boy the nursemaid used to warn me off the reflective premises by telling me that if I looked in the glass too long I should see the devil leering over my shoulder. I think now that a little imprisonment and hard labour would have done that nursemaid no harm. As we grow up we fall into the habit of sneering at the man who is fond of viewing himself. We brand him as a softy and a sillikin. We speak of him as a "grinning ape." The prejudice against such a Narcissus is strengthened by the fact that in nine cases out of ten he is really and wholly a fool. Thus, Lord Claude Miffles, who looks at himself all dinner-time in a spoon, and Sir Ricketts Tufton, who always carries a hunting-watch in order that he may survey himself in the polished convexity of the case under pretext of ascertaining the time, have notoriously not an ounce and a half of sense between them.

A man must be very hard pushed to know how to employ himself if he goes mirror-hunting out of doors. Abroad his business is clearly not to look at himself, but at other people, in order that he may observe their ways and gather truth and knowledge according to his lights. But at home and in solitude this obligation in no wise holds good. When you are between four walls and have only your looking-glass to keep you company, I say to you, young, middle-aged, old, stare into it; look at yourself; compare yourself with the self of the day before yesterday—of ten, of twenty years ago. Take stock of the human countenance, and see how much of the divine element yet lingers in its lineaments. You were not always ugly. In infancy you might not have been quite a cherub; yet there was something in your babyhood that was beautiful. All callow as you were, your brow was open, your cheeks were smooth, your eyes clear. There was a smile on your lip sometimes. Run over your features now. Has the "thick-set hazel died" from your topmost head? Has the "hateful crow" trodden down the corners of your eyes? Have the crisp corners become blunt or defaced; or, worse still, have the smooth mouldings been broken into jagged angles or ploughed into deep indentations? You are bald; you are gray; your skin has more of the shagreen than the satin in its texture; you must call on the dentist to-morrow. A little Kalydor or toilet vinegar might do you good.

Alas! you are long past the aid of Rowland or Rimmel. Can J. O. Bully build up Babylon again? Can Rowland restore the Roman forum? Can Truefitt give back to Tyre its pristine splendour? Who has done all this mischief? Time? Ah! Time has a broad back between his wings. Do you think that Time gutted and unroofed all those hoary castles on the Rhine? Those who know the country and its history will tell you that the Grand Monarque and the Great Napoleon, with their shells and their cannons, did ten times more than Time to ruin the old schlossen between the Seven Mountains and the Lorelei. Have you never wasted a palatinate? Have you never blown up Mayence? Look at your face. What do all those lines mean?

Study? Thought? Care? Where is the result? Whence came the care? Look at your face, and be wise ere it is too late.

There was a touch of quaint self-knowledge in that gambling baronet, who, after he had lost a few thousands over the hazard-table at Crockford's, would walk up to a plate-glass mirror, and shake his fist at himself, and exclaim, "Ah, you fool! you infernal fool! For twopence I would knock your head off your shoulders. You needn't scowl at me, you black-looking scoundrel. I say you are a fool—a confounded fool!" But the baronet should have gone through this pantomime in his own chamber and alone, before he dressed for Pall Mall and St. James's Street.

Judiciously and cautiously conducted, periodical self-examination in the looking-glass may be highly advantageous. Of course the outward guise—even in solitude, when the best worn mask will fall off—is not invariably the criterion of the inner man. One of the most dissipated persons—the most incorrigible nightbird I ever knew—had quite a seraphic countenance. It was wonderful to see him, the morning after an orgie (he never having been to bed), with his fair glossy hair curling over his white temples, a roseate bloom (not a flush) on his downy cheek, his blue eyes sparkling, and his whole self looking as though he fed on curds and whey and roasted butterflies' wings. He went down hill garlanded with flowers; but down he went, nevertheless, and fell to pieces suddenly.

While I am writing about looking-glasses comes across me the reminder that, so far as the philosophical study of one's self is concerned, modern science has very nearly succeeded in superseding the use of looking-glasses. A friend, five hundred miles away, sends me her photographic *carte de visite*. Well, what of that? She might have sent me a miniature. But a miniature costs much money, and is not easily sent by post; and moreover, without intending the slightest disrespect to miniature painters, I venture this statement: that they are, in general, sad flatterers. Now, the camera obscura never flatters. It disparages. If you

go into it ugly, you come out of it uglier. How stern old Oliver Cromwell would have delighted in a sitting to a photographer! Not a wrinkle, not a pimple, in that rough face would the impartial lens have spared. If photography had only existed three hundred years ago, what strange commentaries might we not now possess on the reputed beauties and gallants whose adulatory portraiture has come down to us! Queen Bess's *carte de visite* might be that of a coarse, ill-favoured old hag; half King Charles's beauties might appear as snub-nosed and square-jawed as the beauties of the ballet that you may purchase nowadays in the Burlington Arcade or the Passage Choisseul. La Belle Stuart might seem sun-freckled and Mrs. Bracegirdle wall-eyed; Marlborough a round, pot-bodied, common kind of man; and Lord Chesterfield a vulgar-looking "gent."

I think that a man anxious to obey the precept "Know thyself" might gather much intimate self-acquaintance if he had his *carte de visite* taken at least once a month, with a life-sized photograph once a year. He should keep the collection, not for public exhibition, but for private contemplation. He should muse over his multiplied effigies, and write marginal notes in the album where they are enshrined. Let there be no touching up, no smoothing away of furrows, no darkening of hair and whiskers. Let him insist on having the real, raw, untampered-with photographs. And when he winds his way to the operator's studio, let him go in his ordinary costume—unkempt, if it be his custom not to brush his hair; shabby, if he be usually averse from sacrificing to the Graces. When he sits or stands, let him assume his natural attitude—or no attitude, which is the most natural one of all. Let him sternly repudiate the traditional book, or pencil, or scroll, and kick away the carefully-draped table, the eternal arm-chair, the scene-painted columns, curtain, and balustrade—all the hackneyed "properties" of the photographer. The picture of a man with a wall behind him is all he needs.

I have a neat little collection of *cartes de visite* of this kind. I even go further. When I take a long suburban walk or a run to

a provincial town I stop at the nearest "studio" or the nearest van, and have sixpennyworth of portraiture done on glass, with a veneer of black varnish behind. If you adopt this custom you will ere long be in a position to indulge in the most edifying meditations, and may give your looking-glasses a very long holiday. If time hang heavy on your hands, out with the album, or overhaul the pile of sixpenny half-length tinsel frames which you may keep locked in your bedroom drawer. There you are in many moods and under kaleidoscopic phases and conditions. Ah! there is the new frock-coat in which you went to that little fish dinner at the Trafalgar. You remember—the day you were detained so long in the City, writing important letters. There is the shooting-jacket in which you took your pedestrian tour in Scotland. There, too, are your knapsack and your Tyrolese wide-awake, and those famous walking-boots that gave you the soft corns. In that white waistcoat, my friend, you were married It was but five years since; yet you have grown too stout to wear that waistcoat now. What has become of that cameo pin? Ah! you gave it to Jack Flukes, who went to Australia and made so much money at the bar there, and never wrote to you. Why, here you are, with Jack Flukes himself leaning over your shoulder! How fond of you the old fellow seems! What a dear old fellow it was! But he never wrote from Melbourne, not even in answer to that missive in which you informed him that you had been sued on that little bill, the proceeds of which paid his passage to the Antipodes.

I knew a man who had evil craft enough to make photography serve the purposes of his hatred and revenge. He had loved a woman who was beautiful, and accomplished, and haughty, and who, after showing him some slight favour, scorned him. In the days of her condescension—brief and fleeting as those days were—she gave him a large photographic portrait of herself, blazing with pride, and youth, and beauty. They quarrelled, and parted, and many hundred miles—thousands at last—yawned between them. Two years passed away, and the man found a woman to love and not to scorn him, and married, and was happy, and nearly forgot his

old love. In a print-shop window one day he saw her *carte de visite*. He went in and bought it. The shopkeeper had half-a-dozen in different dresses and attitudes; for she had turned her accomplishments to account, and had become a kind of celebrity. He bought them all. This was at the height of the London season. At its close she went abroad. At the beginning of the next season she came again, and was not quite so celebrated, but there were more and various *cartes de visite* of her published.

At last he had to ask for them by name, for he grew doubtful in recognising her face. Not four years had passed by, but she had altered strangely. Her beauty was of the evanescent kind. Then the man would arrange his photographs, like a suit of playing cards, by the side of the first and beauteous photograph, and, remembering the words that Clarendon spake to Castlemaine, would hug himself with a cruel joy. *The woman was growing old.* "Aha! my lady," he would chuckle, "how sharp this nose is, how sunken are those cheeks, how deep are the lines under those eyes!" He got a powerful magnifying-glass, and declared that her rich wavy hair was thinning. He only regretted that chromatic photography had not yet been discovered. "If one could only see the real colours of life, in place of these monotonous tints of sepia and ochre," he muttered—"if one could only see that her lips were pale and her cheeks sallow, and that there was silver in her hair!" But he consoled himself in remarking how thin her hands had grown, and what deep "salt-cellars" were by her collar-bones. If this man had been a poet, he might have added a stanza to the "Lady Clara Vere de Vere" of Alfred Tennyson.

From whichever point we regard it, this *carte de visite* movement is full of strange features and stranger helps to insight of mankind. It is a most revolutionary movement. It has done much—a thousand times more than ever democrat or demagogue could do—to demolish the Right Divine to govern wrong. From the *cartes de visite* we learn the astounding fact that kings and queens are in dress and features precisely like other people. Marvellous, preternatural, as this may seem, it is true. Wings

do not grow upon the shoulders of monarchs. They are compelled to tread like common mortals; and many of them look like very coarse and vulgar mortals, too. They have the same number of arms and legs as us plebeians; nay, more than that, some stoop unwieldily at the shoulders, and others are unmistakably bow-legged—yes, bow-legged. In the grand old days of Spanish etiquette "the Queen of Spain had no legs;" but this destructive *carte de visite* mania has made short work of the fictions of etiquette.

It is all over with the Right Divine. D.G. might as well be effaced from the European currency. Sovereigns may reign in the hearts of their people—and there are some who do so reign, and long may they reign say I!—but they can no longer hope to perpetuate their sway by throwing the dust of flattering portraits in the eyes of the multitude. Poor old George the Fourth! What would he have thought of a *carte de visite?* You can't disguise your wig in one. The false parting *will* come out. Padding is easily detected. The rods of crinoline are defined. The king may sit in his counting-house counting out his money, the queen may be in the kitchen eating bread and honey; but the operator pops in at the window and focuses the twain, and there is no mistake at all about their being very plain.

IV.

A Tour in Bohemia.

HAVE travelled in Bohemia, and have been of it—a Bohemian. I know its ways and means, its larger iniquities and lesser foibles; and I am here to tell what I know of it truly.

Amid a redundant population and a plethoric civilisation the Bohemian Republic has gradually grown up to be a power, patent though unrecognised, sensible though scarcely visible, influential though despised. The Bohemian interest is representable, and has its representatives now-a-days, just as the manufacturing interest, the shipping interest, the landed interest, and the religious interest have their representatives; and though there be no honourable member for Bohemia returned to the House of Commons, there are a good many honourable members in Bohemia and of Bohemia, who are Bohemian altogether in feelings, in circumstances, and in connections.

The Bohemians I tell of are the gipsies of civilisation. Their skins may be fair, their eyes blue, their skill in telling fortunes, in horse-coping and horse-chanting, and in speaking the Rommany language may be limited; they may prefer the shelter of a tiled roof to that of a blanket tent, and be perfectly free from surreptitious predilections for linen on hedges and the poultry of their neighbours; but they are essentially as nomadic, as predatory, as incorrigibly reluctant to any reputable task, and as diligent in any knavish operation—as dissipated, careless, improvident, and municipally worthless, as any Caloro or Rommany chal that the polyglottian Mr. Borrow has ever told us of. But the Bohemians of civilised society are so far different from their

brethren of Egypt that they recognise no chief—no king, queen, or tetrarch; that they obey no laws save those of their own sweet wills; that they migrate indiscriminately from tribe to tribe; that they intermarry freely (when they can) with the Nazarenes or respectable people; that they are not, as gipsies are, born Bohemians of necessity, but fall, or are led, or wander heedlessly into Bohemia; and finally, that, far from having the rooted antipathy to decent society and a settled condition of life which the gipsy tribe have, your modern Bohemian is continually haunted by the ambition (seldom fulfilled) to forsake his vagabond ways—to wash, shave, leave off sack, and live cleanly like a gentleman.

I cannot attempt to define the limits or boundaries of Bohemia, for it has none. Its head may be in the Queen's palace and its extremities in the hovel of the beggar. There are bits of Bohemia scattered all over the United Kingdom; and if, at some review of the body social, an order were given for all who owned to the name of Smith, and all who—no, not owned, but possessed the character of Bohemianism, to fall out of the ranks, it is my opinion that the number of the Smiths and the number of the Bohemians would not be very unequal. Every class, and tribe, and clique in society; every trade, profession, calling, and avocation; every cell in the great mundane beehive, possesses its Bohemian element. The army, the navy, the pulpit, the bar, the press, the counter, the desk, the kerb-stone, and the gaol, send forth their recruits to swell the Bohemian army.

Court and fashion can no more boast of or bewail their Bohemianism than law and the church and commerce; the severities of sectarianism, the rigidities of money-hunting, the asceticism of business, the preoccupations of statesmanship, the endless cogs and wheels and pendulums, and bolts and bars, with which mankind have fenced about the social clock to regulate and steady it and cause it to keep exact time, and chime the hour with decent intonations, are all powerless to subdue Bohemia, which is for ever playing tricks with the hands of the clock, meddling with its weights, tampering with its springs, causing it to run down

and go wrong, but never to stop, so as to necessitate from time to time the calling in of some State clockmaker, who ofttimes makes only a sorry, bungling job in mending the machine.

The inhabitants of Bohemia, like great men, may be divided into three grand divisions—those who are born Bohemian, those who achieve Bohemianism, and those who have Bohemianism thrust upon them. I will not, however, in the present instance, attempt to adopt this system of classification, but will cull my few samples of Bohemians rather with reference to the rank they hold in the republic of Bohemia than to the circumstances under which they embraced that condition of life.

The old nobility, for the preservation of which it is so essential, according to Young Englandism, that wealth and commerce, laws and learning should die, is by no means deficient in the Bohemian element. The republic has numerous citizens in the House of peers, and among the untitled but still essentially patrician branches of the aristocracy. What a thorough denizen of Bohemia, for instance, is the right honourable the Earl of Fourcloze. Brian de la Bond, Earl of Fourcloze and Baron Mordegage, has been of Bohemia any time these fifty years. His father's grandfather was the notorious Tom Bond, who was so useful to Sir Robert Walpole, and found his coronet at last pretty much as the cock in the fable found the jewel in the farm-yard. The Bonds, however, soon discovered that they were a branch of the De la Bonds, who came over with the Conqueror of course, and all the rest of it; one of whom was private secretary to the Norman monarch, and was by him created Lord Sign and Seal, a title which afterwards unjustly alienated from the family. Tom Bond, in the first instance Baron, then Viscount Mordegage, left his title and estates to his eldest son Alberic, who, becoming even more useful to Mr. Pitt than his father had been to Sir Robert Walpole, was created Earl of Fourcloze. This excellent nobleman was enthusiastically devoted to field sports, and died in a fit of apoplexy at a cock-fight.

The two first possessors of the title had been remarkably saving and accumulative peers, and were enabled to leave to the third,

the right honourable Ulric, estates of great value, and ready cash in abundance. The third lord, however, to use a thoroughly Bohemian phrase, "blued" the large possessions bequeathed to him in every imaginable species of Bohemian extravagance. He raised a regiment during the American war, and paid for it—partially. He made the grand tour thrice running; played with Ferdinand, Count Fathom, and lost. He pulled down Mordegage Hall, and commenced the building of that magnificent structure, Vellum Castle (near Deedsworth, Hampshire), but could never scrape money enough together to finish it. He ran horses at Epsom, Ascot, Doncaster, and Goodwood, and his cracks were always the favourites, and were always nearly winning, but never did. He horsed the Deedsworth mail for two seasons, was master and almost owner of the Hampshire hounds; had shares in lead-mines, coal-mines, canals, and slate quarries, which were all singularly unproductive. He had a brick-field where there was no clay, and drained marshes that were never above water. Finally, after having spent all he possessed and all he could beg, borrow, or by any means obtain, he died, in eighteen hundred and twelve, to the intense grief of the Jews, of his lawyers, and of his very numerous family, leaving to his eldest son Harold the title, the large (encumbered) estates, the splendid (pawned) plate, the capital modern furniture, the innumerable post-obits, the countless debts, mortgages, lawsuits, annuities and pensions chargeable, etcetera, etcetera, etcetera.

The unfortunate young nobleman who succeeded to this dismal inheritance became of the republic of Bohemia, not from choice, but from necessity. Bohemianism was thrust upon him. As he had been himself during his father's lifetime what in those days was denominated wild, and had done a good deal in the post-obit and general stamped paper line himself, he had no sooner come to his father's coronet than he began to frequent the Jews and the lawyers to the full as much as his papa. And as his lordship's race-horses were running at the same time as his lordship's acceptances; as he was continually buying fresh estates, borrowing money at thirty per cent. to pay for them, and then

selling said estates at a loss to pay the interest of the borrowed money; as he embarked large sums in the establishment of a fourth Italian Opera for the metropolis; as he was credulously attached to the idea that a silver-mine existed upon some land he had in Scotland, and spent a few thousands in search of said mine yearly; as he considered himself to be a first-rate judge of Italian pictures by the old masters, and wasn't, but was a constant purchaser notwithstanding; as he had a decided *penchant* for litigation, and was constantly appealing to the court above against the decisions of the court below, which appeals were as constantly dismissed with costs; as he speculated to a large amount in railways which obstinate parliamentary committees refused to sanction bills for; as he kept two or three different households and families besides his own lawful one at home; and as, finally, he delighted, to a pitch of delirium, in a certain game into the carrying on of which closed doors, a green table, and sundry rakes, cylindrical boxes, and little cubes of ivory spotted black, enter, and which involves a partial paralysis of the wrist and elbow, his lordship had not enjoyed his titles and estates many years before the Bohemian hue of his complexion became positively Stygian in blackness.

It takes some time, however, to ruin a lord—at least openly. Such divinity doth hedge the proprietor of a velvet cap with a gold circlet stuck round with imitation pearls, that, though he be notoriously insolvent and impecunious, years will elapse before the tailor will lay down his shears in his service, before Mr. Quartermain will refuse to supply the jobbed horses, before Mr. Giblett will discontinue sending in the haunches of mutton, before even astute Mr Mordecai Overdue will refuse lending something, be it ever so small a modicum, upon a stroke of his lordship's fist. Ah! say not that these are the days of scepticism. What implicit, what devout, what child-like credence we place in the veriest shams, the grossest impostures, the most palpable lies! Sceptics! We pin our faith on a wig. We swear by two square inches of gold lace; we fall down prostrate before a name in a book bound in red leather; we believe in a cocked hat as in

salvation; and yet we boggle over a winking picture or a phial of liquefying blood.

Ruin, however, though long delaying, comes at last to the improvident. Like death, it spares the *regum turres* no more than the *pauperum tabernas*. The Earl of Fourcloze went to sleep in his palace at Vellum and woke up in Bohemia. The ten tribes of Israel made a descent upon his inheritance and divided it between them. The lawyers had a saturnalia, and feasted on parchment and were drunk with red tape. The bailiffs threw off the liveries they had worn as a disguise for years, and were real bailiffs and men in possession—hook noses, red pocket-handkerchiefs, ash sticks, and all, once more. The auctioneer wrote a "Carmen Triumphale," and called it a catalogue. Many talked, more whispered, still more shook their heads, according to the Burleigh theory of wisdom; a few—a very few pitied, and said, "Poor Lord Fourcloze!" So they began to sell him up. They sold the town mansion in Nineveh Square, the manor house in Wales, the land in Scotland, and the great show palace of Vellum, with its pictures, and statues, and bronzes; its carvings, tapestries, and stained glass; its many thousand ounces of plate; its cut-glass and objects of vertu. They sold the house and the park, the tall trees (which Lord Fourcloze would so dearly have liked to have sold himself, if he had dared), the pineries, the conservatories, the aviaries, the peacocks, the deer, the lodge, and the lodge gates, and the gate-posts with the two dolphins, very scaly, rampant. Mr. Gong, the auctioneer, sold them all with orations worthy of Cicero; and the Earl of Fourcloze went up to town and took lodgings in Jermyn Street, nominally in the parish of St. James's, but really in the province of Bohemia.

Towards three of the clock on sunny afternoons during the season you may see creeping up St. James's Street a shrivelled person, elderly, with a fur collar attached to a brown coat, patent-leather boots, a glossy wig, a shiny hat with a turned-up brim. Common people who were in the same state of poverty and Bohemianism as this elderly person, would be dull and rusty in appearance; but he, being a nobleman, shows his misery in

shininess. His yellow kid gloves even shine, though I am afraid not with freshness or cleanliness. You may see the same elderly person, on sunny afternoons *out* of the season, crawling up the West Cliff at Brighton, or sauntering under the arcade of the Rue de Rivoli, or meandering among the bathers, flirters, gossipers, and gamblers, round the Elise-Fontaine at Aix-la-Chapelle, or the Kursaal at Hombourg.

This elderly person was once the Right Honourable Harold de la Bond, Earl of Fourcloze. He is nothing particular now, save a dried up, ruined, unprincipled old man. He "makes debts," as the French call it, still, but in a small way. His address is Squab's Hotel, Jermyn Street; but he resides not *chez* Squab—oh, no! he is too deep in that landlord's debt for that; the real residence of the descendant of the De la Bonds is at Mr. Heeltap's the bootmaker, number two hundred and twenty-two Jermyn Street, where he abuses the maid-servant if his red herring at breakfast be not cooked to his liking, and does not pay his rent regularly. If you ask me how this Bohemian lord lives—how he manages to keep up the shiny hat and the fur collar, and to travel first-class to Paris and Hombourg, I can only answer that he *does* live, and lives thus. His relatives allow him a little, perhaps: he is a lord "for a' that;" and really lords seem to be able to get their titles discounted when they have nothing else convertible, and to exist, somehow, upon the bare fact of being lords.

So the Earl of Fourcloze drags his slow length along the Bohemia of St. James's. He is to be found in all sorts of disreputable Bohemian haunts. In sixth-rate clubs, where retired coal-merchants are proud of him and make much of him, and treat him to wines and meats for his lordship's sake; in clubs of worse odour still—clubs which Inspector Beresford visits with policemen and dark lanterns, and sledge-hammers, at untimely hours in the morning; in suspicious cigar-shops; at the wings of queerly-managed theatres, where ballets are the staple entertainment, and the management is proud of my lord's patronage, and can always find an engagement for Mademoiselle Anaïs or Mademoiselle Fifine, to oblige my lord.

You will tell me that the Earl of Fourcloze must have other means of employment to support all these expenses, for all these things cost money; but I must tell you once for all that the citizens of Bohemia, as a body, have the privilege of living no one knows how, but still of living much better than many persons who earn their bread by the sweat of their brow. The means in Upper and Lower Bohemia may be different—the ways more or less crapulous; but the end, life, is always attained. The occasional clean shirt, the always dandy though ofttimes seedy attire, the tolerably regular dinner, the scarcely ever failing means of getting drunk and wasting money in extravagance, come from heaven knows where, but they *do* come; 'tis only he who has been initiated in the Royal Arch of Bohemianism who knows the whence, the how, and the reason why: I should be false to my adopted country were I lightly to disclose the mystic *conditio vivendi* to him unaffiliated to the Grand Lodge of Bohemia.

Thomas Lord Marlinspike is another bright ornament of aristocratic Bohemia. The Lord Thomas's father is the Earl of Clewline, the son of the great naval peer. Lord Clewline wears low shoes, a long green greatcoat, and a large gingham umbrella, in which the world says that he carries portions of his large revenues, having been known, when sorely pressed, to relieve the necessities of his son from the recesses of the whalebone casemates of the umbrella in question. Lord Clewline is not at all a Bohemian—he is simply an eccentric lord; and being immensely rich, is much respected by the aristocracy, by his tenantry, and by the editor of the *Capstanhawser Gazette*, in which borough he has a sort of political advowson. He did, some years ago, labour under the trifling imputation of having kicked his wife down the grand staircase of Capstanhawser Castle, but he successfully exonerated himself from the charge by stating that the Countess of Clewline, while descending the staircase, happening to stumble down one of the steps, he merely raised his foot to assist her descent, and so prop her up, as it were; that, stumbling down another step, he raised his foot again, and so on till the countess reached the bottom of the staircase in a succession of

stumblings and proppings-up. Lady C. refuses to live with him which to so good a husband must be a severe blow; and more than that, her aiding and abetting her wicked, infatuated, extravagant Bohemian son proves her clearly to be in the wrong *vis-à-vis* her lord both morally and matrimonially.

Thomas Lord Marlinspike was distinguished at Eton by a spirited propensity for credit, and a disinclination to settle such so-called "ticks" without the direst compulsion; he shone much in paper chases, unauthorised boating and swimming matches; and, from the number of times he was brought to the block, must have benefited (by exercise) the flexor and extensor muscles of the master's right arm considerably. He formed his acquaintance with the immortal writers of Greece and Rome chiefly through the medium of the facile grades to Parnassus called "cribs"; and left Eton with the reputation of having annoyed more dames, frequented during church time on Sundays and owed money at more public-houses, and fought more pitched battles at Montem time, than any other young nobleman of his age and size. He yet lives in the memories of the fags he bullied, the sweetstuff-shopkeepers who trusted him, and the clergymen of the Church of England who flogged him.

His career at the University of Oxford was short but brilliant. Several appearances at chapel with eyes artificially blacked, one with a pair of top-boots appearing beneath his surplice, and a great many more failures in chapel attendance altogether; innumerable quarrels with the proctor, systematic violations of all the University by-laws, from walking on the college grass-plats to driving tandem, soon rendered his withdrawal from St. Bumptious College a matter of necessity and not of choice. He left; and it must be a proud reflection for him now to think that, from the stable-keeper who let him his hackneys to the pastry-cook who sent him his dinners, his name will be long remembered as a defaulter, and enrolled in the imperishable records of the day-book and ledger.

Do not for a moment suppose that I mean to include in the Bohemian category every young spendthrift, be he peer or com-

moner, who runs through his rent-roll faster than the rents come in, outruns the constable at last, and comes to grief and the Insolvent Court. Tom Rakewell, in Mr. Hogarth's print, is no such Bohemian. He is simply a fool; and in the vanity of youthful blood poisons good by misuse, spends all he has, and comes to Bedlam or the Queen's Bench in the natural course of his folly. Every year there are scores of old misers die, who have heaped up riches in their sordid and laborious lifetimes, leaving young Tom Rakewells to gather them. Young Tom squanders the money, entertains fiddlers, buffoons, horse-jockeys, prize-fighters, *bona-robas*, &c.; and is in time taken in execution, or under a commission *de lunatico*, or marries a hideous old woman for her money; but he never dreams of being of Bohemia—a Bohemian.

Every year *The Times* newspaper will contain some score leaders upon some stolen bill trial, in which Tom Rakewell, a Jew, a horse, and a worthless woman are all mixed up to their common disgrace; every Sunday paper, almost, has its extraordinary case of folly and extravagance, with young Tom in the box of the Insolvent Court. There is scarcely a ship sails for Australia without a ruined spendthrift aboard, shipped off to the Antipodes by his friends to prevent his coming to worse; there is scarcely a public-house without some sodden Tom Rakewell, far gone in *delirium tremens*, who has had money once, and run through it all. You will not walk ten paces in the courtyard of a debtors' prison without seeing the shawl dressing-gown fluttering in the breeze, and the tasselled cap of incarcerated Tom, who has been in the Guards, or the Line, or in nothing particular, save the general debauchery line, and has sown his acceptances broadcast, and bought jewellery and double-barrelled guns on credit, to pawn—who is in for it just now, till the governor comes round, and who colours a short pipe, and is so obliging in telling you when the tap will open, and so anxious to know whether you are going through the Court or not.

Thomas Lord Marlinspike was far different to these shallow rakes. He became of Bohemia almost immediately. He ran race-

horses, but he painted them, and nobbled them, and swapped them, and did such inconceivably dirty tricks with them as your poor simple spendthrift would never dream of. Before he was twenty-three he was a bankrupt as a horse-dealer. Then he was insolvent, being described as the "Honourable Thomas Rufus Mayntogallant, commonly called Lord Marlinspike, formerly of Sandcrack Lodge, near Richmond, omnibus and cab proprietor, afterwards of Three, Muttleston Street, Pimlico, job-master; afterwards of Cloudy Farm, Sussex, farmer, dairyman, and pork butcher; afterwards of Kissingen Spa, Biberich, and Baden-Baden, not of any trade or occupation; afterwards of Six hundred and six, Goliath Square, Belgravia (his father's residence), marker at a billiard saloon; afterwards of the Debtors' Prison, Whitecross Street, commission agent; and now of the Queen's Prison, Southwark, a prisoner for debt. To appear at twelve. All creditors may oppose."

All creditors *did* oppose, as you may imagine, for Thomas Lord Marlinspike had followed all the trades named in his schedule, and, according to report, a good many more; some averring, indeed, that the heir of the peerage of Clewline had not been too proud to have a fourth share in a gambling house, and to keep two or three cigar shops in different parts of London. Men even said that the lordly Thomas was concerned in a betting office, and a loan society which never granted any loans, but subsisted upon the sums paid as fees for inquiries. Opposed, however, by all creditors, the Lord Thomas was by the Chief Commissioner sufficiently relieved from his debts to become twice insolvent afterwards. He is rather quiet now, having, as it is reported, married a charwoman; but he is yet open to sell blank acceptances for sums varying from five shillings to five pounds each. Some of these days, Lord Clewline (who now sternly refuses to give him a shilling) will die; and Thomas will be Lord of Clewline and Capstanhawser, a senator, a justice of peace, lord-lieutenant of his county, perhaps. "Ex quovis ligno fit"—no; all Lord Thomases are not all Lord Marlinspikes. Bohemia is not open to all.

Now, poor Lord Kay Say is really to be pitied for his Bohemianism: the unfortunate young nobleman had really no other choice. Fourth son to a noble marquis, expensively educated, formerly in the Dragoons, not a penny to bless himself with—what was Lord Kay Say to do? Marriage with a rich young lady was out of the question, his poverty being too well known. Digging was beyond his capacity, begging unworthy the fourth son of the Marquis of Fifay. What did Lord Kay Say do but turn director? Yes; if you look at the prospectus of the Costermongers' Mutual Life and Fire Assurance Company; of the Clodhoppers' Freehold Land Society; of the Ragged School Bank of Deposit; of the Machine-Sawing Lucifer Match Company; of the Lodging-House Keepers' Protection Society; of the Beer-Shop Keepers' Guarantee Society; of the Cigar-end Saving Company; in the list of directors of each and all of these incorporations, between Goldworthy Nugget, Quartz Lodge, Holloway, and Major Bangles, H.E.I.C.S., you will find the Lord Kay Plantaganet Montmorency Say, M.P., F.R.S. How F.R.S.? How M.P.? Yet both; but how, Bohemia alone can tell. Lord Kay Say, as a fourth son, would have starved or sunk into some commercial *mésalliance*. As a director he thrives, and wondrously so. If you call upon your friend Gatters, secretary to the Clodhoppers, or Ratters, actuary to the Costermongers, it is ten to one but you will find a smart little brougham at the door, and that one of the clerks in the outer office tells you that you must really wait ten minutes, for that Mr. Gatters or Mr. Ratters is engaged with my lord.

If any man doubt the existence of the province I may call Upper Bohemia, let him wait till the next railway mania, the next assurance mania, the next mining mania, the next gold-finding mania, the next emigration mania. Let him consider the scores of well-educated, well-dressed men, with chains, and rings, and whiskers—ay, and moustaches and tufts—who start up, and are immediately converted into directors, secretaries, provisional committee-men, speculators, "stags"—what you will. How have they lived during the interim? how will they live when the mania

is over? Yet I can hear the wheels of their broughams rattling still, and they dine, and drink, and wear chains and rings, and are jovially Bohemian, mania or no mania.

If I could drive some hundreds of the well-dressed units of what is called Society into the pens of Smithfield market, and then have some Asmodeus at my bidding to untile, not the roofs of the houses, but the heads of the assembly, and read their working brains, what a well-informed man I should be to be sure! In a moment would be made manifest the history of Captain Brown's commission, and Jack Fortinbrass's secret mission from the republic of Guatemala. I should know what Ricochet really does in the City; whether O'Ryan's "esteets in Oireland" have actually any existence; how Mrs. Doublefacet pays for her dinner-parties; where Corneyguide gets his jewellery from; how many hundreds a year Tom Dummy clears at whist, and to what particular morning journal Captain Cobb, who writes for the papers, is attached. Perhaps the most startling and instructive revelation of all would be to know where all the well-dressed inhabitants of Bohemia live. They swagger about Regent Street, they sit next us at dinner, they are at our evening parties, at the club, the theatre; but where do they live? Perhaps in Belgravia, perhaps in back streets off Leicester Square or Clare Market. Perhaps *I* know, but, while I tell of the chief features of Bohemia, scorn to uncover the nakedness of the land.

With all due deference to M. Henri Mürger, whose admirable book, "Les Bohémiens de Paris," has suggested this desultory article, I cannot help thinking that the Bohemianism most pregnant with matter for reflection and astonishment is that of the conventionally termed upper classes—not that of painters, and poets, and musicians, and journalists. It is comparatively easy to understand how young Tibbets the artist—who has not been able to get a picture accepted by the Academy yet, who has no connection even among picture-dealers, no patrons, no friends, save artists and authors as poor as he himself is, very little credit with his artists' colourman, and still less with his landlady—is ofttimes put to strange shifts and hardships, and when he does receive a

little money, spends it very quickly for the sheer novelty of the thing, wandering about in the intervals of a windfall in a strangely-vagabondising and Bohemian manner.

We can understand Tibbets, so we can Jack Midriff, the medical student, and Frank Readiscript, who is writing for the *Penny Voice of Freedom* till he can get an engagement on *The Times*. But for mystery and subtlety of ways and means, and fertility of invention, commend me to Upper Bohemia. The struggling poet, painter, student, have little if any appearance to keep up. Long hair and a threadbare coat are rather picturesque than otherwise. They involve no evening parties, no boxes at the opera, no broughams in the park. In the higher spheres only are these Napoleons of Bohemianism to be found. They dash by you, all glittering and splendid, and while your friend Jones whispers, "hasn't a penny in the world," Tompkins admiringly sibilates, "lives at the rate of a thousand a year." It may be in days to come that if I have power and you inclination, I will treat of that Bohemia which lies at the very bottom of the social ladder—down among the straw and the mud, and which alone can be the parallel to the Bohemia I have attempted cursorily to describe.

V.

Birthdays.

BIRTHS, Marriages, and Deaths! This sentence is succinct enough in all conscience; 'tis as short as a hunting mass; and yet it comprises in its three brief acts the whole drama of life. Of the acting copy of that drama, be it understood, there is a great folio edition locked up in a certain library to which humanity is denied access; and in that volume of the human comedy there are prologues and epilogues, exits and entrances, stage directions, and variorum notes that we wist not of; but we, in our limited appreciation, are confined to being spectators of (and, in our turn, actors in) the three-act epopœa of birth, of marriage, and of death. The comedy is played out with a due attention to the unities and exigencies of scenic effect and spectacle. There is a grand birthday fête in the first act; a bridal chorus in the second, with maidens clad in white, and scattering flowers; then the stage darkens, and the green curtain goes down upon all the dancing and glitter, and there is nothing left but darkness and the night-watchers.

Birthdays! What a joyous stream of melody runs through that gay first act of the play! The instruments of the musicians are in excellent tune; the lamps burn brightly; the scenery and dresses are new and glittering; the audience are in capital humour, predisposed to be pleased, and prognosticating all sorts of good things for the piece and its actors. See, here is the Infant Roscius, the Young Garrick, the Sucking Sappho. What thunders of applause greet these juvenile debutants on the imperial stage! Alack, how often it must happen that Roscius

comes to shame, and Garrick is "goosed," and Sappho makes a bad end of it, pelted with oranges and halfpence, before the end of the third act! But, clap or hiss, the end must come, and the bell ring, and the curtain fall.

Birthdays! Are they not one of the three great legacies inherited equally by all the children of humanity? Nokes has his birthday as well as the Norman-descended earl; and Nokes, or Smith, or Briggs, may keep their birthdays with as much joy and merry-making as kings and queens with their salutes of a hundred guns and one.

When a man dies, if he be a pauper, we pack him up in a deal box, and "rattle his bones over the stones" to the pauper burial-ground, where we bury him like so much rubbish to be shot; if he be a prince, we wrap him up in velvet, and gold, and stuff his poor dead body full of sweet herbs, and make a herald brag about his empty titles over his grave. We have nodding plumes, "rich silk scarves and mutes," gilt nails, cherubim's heads, and silver-gilt plates, for the wealthy or noble "party"; we have the hospital dead-house, the parish shell, the contract coffin, the maimed rites, and the drunken gravedigger, for the poor man; just as in France they have the deep-mouthed serpent, the shrill choristers, the *Dies iræ*, the incense, the master of the ceremonies with his silver chain and ebony bâton, and all the bric-à-brac of the *pompes funèbres*, for Monsieur; and for plain Jean or Pierre just a *croque-mort* or two, a dingy bier on wheels, with a driver in rusty boots and a battered cocked-hat, a scant service of bad Latin hastily mumbled, and an asperging brush for holy water like a stunted hearth-broom.

But though a man can as certainly bring no more into the world than he can carry anything out, there is in the first birthday of royalty little difference from that of Jack Ragg the crossing-sweeper. There may be a difference in the *locale*, and guns may fire when the child is born; but that is all. A few magging crones are gratified with the first view of Mrs. Ragg's first, as my Lord Chancellor, my Lord Archbishop, and my Lords the great Officers of State are with the first public

exhibition of Prince Prosperous; but there is the same skill in the doctor, the same care and attention in the nurse, the same solicitude and joy in all womankind that are about; the same pride in the father, the same endless chattering, hurrying about, and ceaseless potterings over fireplaces with saucepans containing mysterious messes, at the birth of the little sweep in the garret as of the little prince at the palace. Napoleon, bursting into the golden antechamber of the Tuileries with that long-desiderated man-child in his arms, swathed in the purple, and crying out to his marshals, and ministers and cardinals, with all the joy and exultation of satisfied ambition and new nascent hope, "It is a King of Rome!" sings but to the self-same tune as the parish nurse does to the happy Mr. Ragg, senior, when, holding a particularly diminutive infant in her arms, she informs him "that it is the finest child that hever were seen."

They both mean baby, and they are both equal in their birth. Baby Beggar is as good as Baby Basileus. The gruel is in a silver cup or a broken butter-boat. The doctor must be an M.R.C.S., whether he have the prefix of Sir and the prestige of Court practice or not; and the poor man's baby makes an equal item as the heir of a Crown in the Registrar-General's returns. Nay, if Mr. Ragg *père* choose to invest three shillings and sixpence with the proprietors of *The Times* newspaper, he can read at full length in that journal such an announcement as "In Hampshire Hog Lane, the lady of John Ragg, Esquire, of a son." His lady may go to St. Giles's or St. James's, and be churched by a live Doctor of Divinity; and what more can the infant prince have than a little larger type in the newspaper, a few more lines, the smoke and smell of a little gunpowder, and an archbishop to compose a form of thanksgiving to be recited on the Sunday following in all parish churches in England and the town of Berwick-upon-Tweed.

But though our first birthdays are all pretty nearly alike, no sooner is baby short-coated and weaned than we begin to play our little game of mummeries and masqueradings, posture-

makings and hankey-pankey tricks; and the birthday becomes an institution to be kept with great state and splendour and carousal by the rich, to be neglected or ignored by the poor. Little Jack Ragg speedily forgets all about his birthday, if indeed anybody ever took the trouble to inform him of the exact date of the anniversary of that event: that young gentleman has sundry important preoccupations touching the provision of shoes for his feet, a shirt for his back, victuals for his belly, and a bed to lay his head upon; and he is oftener prompter to bewail his existence altogether, and that he "hever wor born," than to make inquiries as to when his natal day falls due, and rejoice thereupon. Little black Topsy never had a birthday, she 'spects; she "growed," for aught she knows; the "speculator" who raised her, old master who made the flesh fly, or old missis who whipped her with a poker, never made her birthday presents.

What should she, or Jack Ragg in England, or Fagg the tramp, or Bobtail the thief, know or care about their birthdays? They have no large Family Bibles with all the birthdays of the family accurately registered on the fly-leaves. They have no bibles at all, no families, no anything. What should they know of their own birthdays when they are utterly ignorant of the meaning and purpose of the great blessed birthday—nay, ignorant of its very being. You shall go down courts and alleys; you shall hold your breath in the noisome stench of common lodging-houses; you shall stir up the breathing heaps of foul rags on which the rays of the policeman's bull's-eye fall; you shall see the man in tatters and the "woman in unwomanly rags," the boy-thief, the girl without a name, the whole tribe from the patriarch to the new-born babe, in dirt, hunger, misery, and the ignorance that slayeth. To talk to these forlorn beings about their birthdays!

Yet we all have our birthdays, though ofttimes disregardful of them as of other precious gifts; there may be no oxen roasted whole, or fireworks let off, or Sir Roger de Coverley danced when our natal anniversary comes round; yet we can be

joyful for our birthdays, and thankful for that mercy which has permitted us to enjoy so many of them.

I am not about to inflict upon my reader a course of Lempriére or Adam's Roman Antiquities, else it would be as easy as lying to tell you how the ancients kept their birthdays; how the men sacrificed to Jupiter and the women to Juno; how rich dresses were worn and presented as gifts; how great feasts were held, where the guests in postures of graceful accubation made themselves sick with those peculiarly nasty dishes which were the glory of Roman cookery. Yet there are some modern birthdays in whose phases of celebration there may be things socially interesting.

Place to Princes, and let us have a peep at the King's birthday! Which king and which birthday shall we have? There are many to choose from. Shall we go back to the twenty-ninth of May, sixteen hundred and sixty, and stand at Charing Cross (close by where was once a certain statue, pulled down during the late troubles, and supposed to have been cast into parliamentary ordnance for administering "apostolic blows and knocks" long since, but which has been safely hidden underground, and is soon to be set up again in as high estate as ever with new glorifications of pedestal carvings by Grinling Gibbons)? Shall we stand here while the trumpets bray out their noisy fanfares, and the joy-bells ring their merry peals, and the Tower guns thunder forth salutes, and countless musquetoons and escopettes go off on private account, and all in honour of this brave birthday—the birthday of Charles Stewart, King of England, the king who is come to his own again, and is making his triumphal entry into his restored kingdom on the thirtieth anniversary of his birth?

Here come the London train-bands, with silver trumpets and flaunting banners. They have quite forgotten all about ship-money, and the five members, and Mr. Prynne's ears. Hark, how the mob shout "Long live the King!" See how the soldiers wave their pikes: these are Monk's Coldstreams, my dear. These loyal hearts in buff jerkins and headpieces

belong to the same armed bands that. "clapped their bloody hands" when another Charles Stewart, also King of England, came out of a certain window in the banqueting-house close by, twelve years agone. Mr. Marvell, the member for Hull, who writ that piece on the death of Charles I., is sitting at a window in the house of a friend of his, a bowyer, at Charing Cross. He sees the armed bands and hears the shouts of the loyal mob, and thinks of the time they shouted "To your tents, O Israel!" and smiles melancholily.

Now come the heralds and pursuivants (the last time they had new tabards was at Oliver's funeral); now come the peers in their robes—many of them have left little scores unpaid in the Low Countries, my dear, and what is left of their broad acres they carry in the skirts of their velvet robes, and the remnant of their plate in the gold of their coronets, and their rents and fines for renewal of leases in their embroidered garters and jewelled Georges. Here comes the Deliverer, the Restorer of Monarchy, the great Duke of Albemarle; he in his flowing periwig and silver armour and blue ribbon, and steed with embroidered housings, cannot be any relative or connection of that stern General Monk with dull corselet, plain bands, high boots of buff leather, and steeple hat, who was one of Oliver's men, and was so fierce against monarchy only five weeks since. Here comes the Lord Mayor, ready to entertain the King, heaven bless him! with as gorgeous a banquet and as generous wine as he was wont to entertain his Highness the Lord Protector, heaven bless *him* (in the past tense). Here come the barons of the Cinque Ports, bearing the royal canopy; and here comes the hero of the birthday, here comes the King, his royal brothers of York and Gloucester on either side; his swarthy face glowing with pleasure; royal witticisms flowing fast from the royal lips; the royal grace and affability and majesty visible in every flexure of his nervous form, in every curvet of his admirably-managed charger.

The bells ring, the cannons roar, the people shout louder than ever. Flowers are strewn in his path; women weep and

laugh wildly, and wave their kerchiefs; the conduits run wine, the taverns overflow with customers; whole oxen are roasted in open places; at night there is a bonfire at the corner of every street; and decorous Master Samuel Pepys, returning homewards, is seized upon by madcap cavaliers, and made to drink the King's health on his knees. Hurrah! let us all throw our caps into the air and shout for this glorious birthday! Pull Oliver's bones from their grave, and hang dead Bradshaw up on Tyburn gibbet, with the red robe he wore at that awful High Court of Justice about him. Set up the Maypoles again; open all the theatres; bring Doctor Longsleeves back again to his rectory, and send Obadiah Cropears packing to Geneva. Fat pig nor goose no more oppose, nor "blaspheme custard through the nose." The King enjoys his own again; this is his birthday, and each succeeding birthday shall be more glorious than the other.

I wonder, if any decent section of those loyal thousands had had the least idea of what the yearly succeeding birthdays of this well-beloved, long-desired Charles Stewart would bring about, whether they would have shouted quite so loud or quite so loyally. There were many birthdays in store for the restored King yet. At some he touched right royally for the evil, and hung the angel gold about the necks of the sick with his accustomed grace; at one he may have tasted his first pine-apple, and at one cracked that famous joke when he saw the thief pick his courtier's pocket. At all his birthdays, doubtless there were great feasts and merry-makings and junketings; great presentations of rich gifts; great assemblies of courtiers playing basset, and French boys singing love-songs in that "glorious gallery;" court plays in which saintly Miss Blague, vivacious Miss Stewart, and witty Grammont, and worthless Jermyn acted; but as each birthday came round it was to a King becoming more profligate, more heartless, more lavish of his subjects' money, more neglectful of his own and their honour, more detestable, despicable, and scandalous as a man and a monarch.

His last two birthday suits were dyed with the blood of Russell and Sidney, and his last shame was to be as cruel as Amurath. And having outlived his subjects' love and his own honour, he died a poor worn-out, reprobate pensioner. This was the Merry Monarch, my dear; and we admire his goodness of heart, his charming affability, and his great jocoseness even unto the present day.

VI.

CHAMBERS IN THE TEMPLE.

FIFTEEN years ago (1839), when I was a boy at school in Paris, wearing a uniform very much resembling that of a Metropolitan policeman (the dress is military now, and they have metamorphosed my old college into an Imperial Lyceum), eating a distressing quantity of boiled haricots washed down by the palest of pink wine and water, and conjugating a prodigious quantity of verbs, regular and irregular—the tenses of which have become so very preterpluperfect since that they have faded clean away from my memory—fifteen years ago, then, there was an old gentleman inhabiting the English, or St. Honoré quarter of the French capital—a white-headed, stormy, battle and weather-beaten veteran of the salt sea—a rear-admiral in the English navy and on the half-pay thereof. He had been celebrated all over the world in his time for deeds of daring and chivalrous bravery; but that had been a very long time ago; and the ungrateful generation among whom his latest years—those that were to be but labour and sorrow—were passed, celebrated only his eccentricities, and ignored or were indifferent to his glory.

This is the way of the world, my Christian friend. When you and I come to be old men—and should we ever have given the world cause to talk about us—we shall find that the books we have written, the pictures we have painted, or the statues we have hewn, will be dismissed to oblivion with a good-natured contempt, as things meritorious enough in their way, but quite out of date; should we be worth paragraphs, or

anecdotes, they will have reference to the redness of our noses, the patterns of our trowsers, our manner of eating peas with our knives, our habit of putting the left leg foremost when we walk, or our assumed fondness for cold rum and water.

The Duke of Marlborough's petty avarice and hagglings with the Bath chairmen were talked about long after the conqueror of Blenheim was forgotten, and the nation had even grumbled about paying for the palace it had voted him in the first outburst of its gratitude. Lord Peterborough, walking from market in his blue ribbon, with a fowl under one arm and a cabbage under the other, quite threw into the shade Lord Peterborough, the hero of Almanza. Whenever the name of the Marquis of Granby occurs to us now-a-days, it is in connection with the Incorporated Association of Licensed Victuallers, with foreign wines, beer, and tobacco—not with battles won, or sieges successfully conducted. Whose aquiline nose, white ducks, and hat-saluting fingers, were household words in London to the populace, who had forgotten Waterloo, when they smashed the windows of Apsley House with stones, because its owner was an enemy to Reform? Whose children grin now at the caricature presentments of the prominent nose and plaid trousers of the man who was the greatest orator, the greatest advocate, the greatest reformer of the law, England has ever seen, and who thirty years since shook this realm from end to end by the thunder of his eloquence, and dashed down walls of corruption, one after another, with his impetuous hand? The world is as ungrateful, as fickle, as petulant as a woman. I warrant Omphale rapped the fingers of Hercules when, sitting at her feet a-spinning, he happened to ravel the flax. He who had vanquished the Nemæan lion, and quelled the Erymanthian boar, was forgotten in the careless spinner.

So it was with the old gentleman whom I knew in Paris fifteen years ago. People talked of the strange fancy he had of leading an old white horse about the streets, on which he never rode; much merriment was excited by the rumour that he slept with his head through a hole in a blanket—I am not exaggerating—the

quidnuncs of the Rue St. Honoré and the Champs Elysées were infinitely amused at his strange ways, his loud and rambling talk, his general oddity of manner; very few people cared to remember that before most of them were born he was famous over the whole world as the English Commodore Sir Sidney Smith, the heroic defender of Acre, the scourge of the French navy, from the lofty three-decker to the smallest *chasse-marée*, and nearly the only man for whom the great Napoleon—the impassible, ambitious, who no more deigned to love or hate men, with him, or against him, any more than Mr. Staunton, the chess-player, loves or hates the pawns in his game—condescended to entertain a violent personal dislike. Sir Sidney Smith used coolly to declare that Napoleon was jealous of him. It is certain that he annoyed and chafed the great man horribly, and in Egypt drove him to the perpetration of a very sorry joke, having positively challenged him to single combat, which Napoleon declined, till—having rather an exalted idea of the "foeman worthy of his steel"—he could produce the ghost of the great Duke of Marlborough.

Sir Sidney Smith died in Paris; but it is not with his death or latter days that I have to do. I wish to tell the story of his escape from certain chambers which he occupied in the Temple while he was yet the famous Commodore, admired by Europe, and hated by the French Directory, and especially by General Bonaparte. How much of strict historic truth there may be in the story, it is not for me to say. The journals of the period tell pretty nearly the same tale; but even newspapers will occasionally err, and even the buckets of grave history writers often stop short of the bottom of the well of verity.

Sir Sidney Smith, taken prisoner in a daring cutting-out expedition on the coast of Brittany, was confined in the prison of the Temple in Paris, in the year seventeen hundred and ninety-eight. Some idea may be formed of the importance which the republican government attached to his capture and detention, from the fact, first, that the Directory refused to liberate him in exchange for M. Bergeret, a post-captain in the French navy, and again, on another occasion, positively refused to receive as an equivalent for

his person no fewer than twelve thousand French prisoners. A man worth ten thousand pounds is something; but a sea captain not to be bought for twelve thousand fighting men is indeed rich and rare.

Unfortunately, even distinction has its embarrassments, and such was the store set by the safe keeping of Sir Sidney by his captors, that his confinement was of the most rigorous description. Verdun or Biche was good enough for ordinary prisoners of war; but the redoubtable Commodore was transferred to the Tower of the Temple; that gloomy revolutionary Bastile, the scene of the last days of Louis the Sixteenth and Marie Antoinette, and of the slow agony and death of the poor little captive Dauphin—the tower that was afterwards to witness the darkest episodes of the Consulate — the reported suicides, but whispered murders of Pichegru and Captain Wright, the last adieux of the simple, yet desperate, Chouans, the stern presence of their leader Georges Cadoudal. In the Temple, then, Sir Sidney Smith was incarcerated. The guards were doubled, the defences strengthened, all communication from without was denied him, and the most rigid surveillance was exercised over all his actions.

Once, however, having got their prisoner safe within the four strong walls of the Temple, isolated him from all exterior influences, and placed a strong guard over him, the Directory did not feel it necessary to treat him with any great personal severity. They did not load him with chains, they did not lock him up in a dungeon, they did not feed him upon bread and water. Sir Sidney was amply provided with pecuniary resources, and was allowed to keep himself. Apartments, the most commodious that the prison could afford, were allotted to him, and, furthermore, he was allowed to maintain something like an establishment of domestics. Besides Captain Wright, who acted as his secretary, he had a cook, a valet, and notably an English servant, half groom, half confidential man, called Sparkes. The cook and valet were freemen, and Frenchmen; Sparkes had been taken prisoner at the same time as the Commodore, but the condition attached to the French who were permitted to attend upon Sir

Sidney was, that they should share his imprisonment—not one was permitted to pass the outer gate of the Temple.

I am not aware whether it has ever been the lot of any of the ladies or gentlemen who read this to have suffered the slow torture of imprisonment. I hope not; but if any such there be, they will readily understand how prone is the human mind, when the body is incarcerated, to devote itself to the culinary art. Most prisoners are good cooks, or, at least, love good eating. The Man with the Iron Mask was a gourmand. The sham Dauphin (one of the nine hundred and ninety-nine sham Dauphins) who called himself Duke de Normandie, and had passed three-fourths of his existence in the different prisons of Europe, was renowned for the confection of roast turkey stuffed with chestnuts. When confined in Sainte Pélagie, in eighteen hundred and thirty-three, it was a matter of daily occurrence to hear a cry from his fellow-prisoners of "Capet, is the turkey nearly ready?" and the pseudo-descendant of St. Louis would answer, "I am dishing it." The late Mr. Rush,* on the memorable occasion of his trial, addressed a very specific and emphatic billetdoux from his retreat in Norwich Castle to the eating-house keeper opposite, commanding pig, "and plenty of plum sauce." I have seen in Whitecross Street prison an analytical chemist frying pancakes, and it was once my fortune to know, in the Queen's Bench, a doctor of divinity whose mock-turtle soup would have rather astonished Mr. Farrance, pastry-cook, of Spring Gardens.

Now, though Sir Sidney Smith on shipboard would have been perfectly content with ship's cookery,—salt junk, salt horse, or salt mahogany, as it is indifferently called; plum duff, gray pea-soup, sea-pie, lobscouse, weevilly biscuit, and new rum—no sooner did he find himself immured in the Temple, than he fell into the ordinary idiosyncrasy of prisoners, and become an accomplished *bon-vivant*. The choicest of fish, flesh, and fowl were procured from the Parisian market, and (after being strictly

* Hanged at Norwich in 1849, for the murder under romantic circumstances of the Jermys, father and son, at Stanfield Hall, Norfolk.

examined at the gate to see whether they contained any treasonable missives) furnished forth, by no means coldly, his prison table. The famous roast beef of Old England was seen, and smoked within those gloomy walls. Sir Sidney had endless disputes with the French cook concerning the thickness of melted butter, the propriety of potatoes appearing at table with their skins on; the injury done to a rumpsteak by beating it; the discretion necessary in the employment of garlic, and the number of hours necessary to be devoted to the boiling of a plum-pudding. The cook would *not* boil it long enough. Unless closely watched, he would withdraw it furtively from the pot, hide it in secret places till dinner-time, and declare stoutly that it had been boiling eight hours when it had not been three on the fire.

But, errors excepted, the captives lived as well as those bellicose bipeds of the gallinaceous breed, whose spur-combats were formerly the delight of our British nobility, are popularly supposed to live. Nor were good liquids wanting to wash down these succulent repasts. For the first time, perhaps, in France that noble compound, the punch of the United Kingdom (for England, Scotland, and Ireland are all equally famous for it) was brewed within the prison walls; and every Frenchman who tasted it—even the rabidest enemy of "Pitt et Cobourg"—thenceforth renounced the small-beer julep, half sour, half syruppy, thitherto misnamed "punch" abroad. Brandy, sherry, and claret also formed part of the Commodore's cellar, and, in particular, he had laid in a supply of admirable old port wine—rare old stuff—bottles of liquid rubies, in a setting of rich crust and cobwebs. Money can do almost anything in any times. It can break the sternest of blockades, and, though it could not get Sir Sidney Smith out of prison, it could procure him a supply of the primest wines in the English market.

The French cook admired the old port wine hugely. He discovered that "porto" was required for a great many dishes and sauces. He was discovered in the kitchen one day by Sparkes, weeping bitterly into a stewpan, by the side of an empty port-wine bottle. He declared on that occasion, with some thickness

of utterance, that the Directory were brigands, and the National Assembly thieves, and that the name of the legitimate ruler of France was Louis the Eighteenth. He was very pale and shaky next day, affected great republican sternness, and insisted more than ever upon being called "Citizen" and "Junius Brutus," when, honest man, his name was Jean Baptiste all over, from his slippers to his white nightcap. These details may probably seem useless; but the Commodore's port wine had more to do with his escape from his chambers in the Temple than you may at present imagine.

One gilt and burnished afternoon in the autumn of this same year 'ninety-eight, a party of four persons were assembled in Sir Sidney Smith's sitting-room in the Tower of the Temple. One of these persons was Captain Wright, whom, as he has nothing further to do with this history, I need not specially describe. The second was Sir Sidney Smith, then in all the pride and vigour of his manhood—a little pale, perhaps, through want of exercise, but a comely man, and fair to look upon. He had his hair powdered, and wore top-boots, which would seem somewhat strange articles of costume for a naval officer, albeit in plain clothes, in these days, but were the fashion in 'ninety-eight. The third was Mr. Sparkes, his body servant. Mr. Sparkes was of the middle height, and remarkably stout, though anything but corpulent in the face. He was so stout about the chest that you could scarcely divest yourself of the impression that he had more than one waistcoat on. Perhaps he had. A very low forehead had Mr. Sparkes, and a very voluminous allowance of bushy red hair. He was freckled, and his chin was lost in the folds of his ample cravat. He had a considerable impediment in his speech, which caused him to speak slowly, and not often, and not much at a time; but he was a great humorist, and was an enormous favourite among the prison officials for his droll sayings, and for the hideously execrable manner in which he pronounced the French language.

A thorough Briton—an incorrigible "rosbif" was Sparkes, said they—there were some hopes of the Commodore acquiring

a decent knowledge of French after a few years' residence; but as for Sparkes, he would never learn, not he. Doctor Jollivet, the prison surgeon, who had been in England, and spoke ravishing English, declared John to be "tout ce qu'il y avait de plus coqueni"—by which, it is to be presumed, he meant cockney. Sparkes had been brought up, he said, with the Commodore, which accounted for a certain degree of familiarity with which the latter treated him, and which he was far from showing to the other servants. This present golden afternoon John half stood behind his master's chair, half leaned against the sideboard. He was attentive in supplying the wants of the other persons present, but he did not neglect to help himself liberally from a special bottle of port behind him, nor did he refrain from joining, from time to time, in the conversation.

The fourth person of this group, and who sat at the end of the table facing the Commodore, was a Frenchman,—a very important person, too, you are to know, being Citizen Mutius Scævola Lasne (formerly Martin), concierge, keeper or head gaoler of the Temple. He was responsible for the safe keeping of the prisoners with his head. He slept every night with the prison keys under his pillow. He knew where the secret dungeons—the underground cachots and cabanons—were, and what manner of men were in them. He was not a man to be despised.

Citizen Lasne was a very large, fat man, with a small head. Gaolers generally are,—but let that pass. Now there is no medium of character or disposition in large fat men with small heads. They are either intolerably vicious, slowly cruel, stolidly hard-hearted, mischievously stupid, torpidly revengeful, dully selfish, sensual and avaricious, or else they are lazy, good-natured, genial, soft-hearted giants—mere toasts and butter, giving freely, lending freely, spending freely, always ready to weep at a pitiful tale, to sing the best song they know, to lend you their best umbrella, and to walk wheresoever you wish to lead them. It is the same with bald-headed men who wear spectacles. They are either atrocious villains or amiable philanthropists. The races admit of no mediocrity.

Citizen Lasne happened, luckily for his prisoners, to be a large fat man, of the second or soft-hearted category. His exterior was rugged and his moustache was fierce. He was as stupid as the libretto of an opera, and as vain as a dabchick; but his nature was honest, simple, confiding, and compassionate. He was the foolish, fat scullion of Sterne metamorphosed into a man. He would have spared a flea when he caught him—a three-bottle flea, drunk with his life-blood, and giddy with leaping over his body. He would do anything for a prisoner save allow him to escape—for, like all slow men, he had a fixed idea, and this fixed idea confirmed him in, and kept continually before him, the conviction that one prisoner the less in the Temple (unless legally discharged) was one head the less upon his own shoulders. This is why he always inspected the bolts, bars, and locks of the doors and windows every night, set the watch, and slept with the keys of the Temple under his pillow.

Citizen Lasne liked drink. For port wine he conceived an immoderate affection. His liking for that beverage was pleasingly gratified, as the Commodore frequently invited him to his table. Misery makes us acquainted with strange bed-fellows, and a gaol makes a man take up with strange boon companions. These eyes have seen the son of an earl hobnobbing at a prison tap with an insolvent boot-closer. On his own quarterdeck, in London, at St. James's, Sir. Sydney Smith would doubtless have been as dignified, not to say haughty, as an Englishman and a Commodore has a right to be. In the state cabin of his own flag-ship he would decidedly not have hobnobbed with Bob Cutskin, the boatswain's mate. But a prisoner in the Temple, far from home, almost solitary, any companionship was welcome to him. This is why he so often invited Citizen Lasne to dinner and to supper. This is why that fat citizen sat facing him at the table on the golden autumn afternoon I treat of.

The Citizen having eaten like an ox (he approved of English cookery much), was now drinking like a fish. He could stand a prodigious quantity of drink—all fat men can. Only, as he drank, his eyes, which were small and round, appeared to diminish

still further in volume, for the little penthouses of his eyelids began to droop somewhat, and his round rosy cheeks to puff out upwards and laterally, while the eyes themselves seemed to recede into their orbits, as though they were lazy with repletion, and were throwing themselves back in their easy-chairs.

The table was covered with plates of fruit and decanters of wine, from both of which Citizen Lasne was helping himself largely—the others in moderation. The Citizen drank his old port out of a tumbler—the starveling and effeminate thimblefulls known as English wine-glasses not having as yet penetrated into the Temple. He persisted in calling the port "a little wine"—*un petit vin délicieux*—meanwhile taking hearty gulps of the libelled liquor; for it is a mighty and generous wine—yea, that invigorateth the frame, and maketh the hearts of men strong within them. It hath cheered the vigils of great scholars, and armed brave warriors for the fray—port wine. As the Citizen drank, however, it was evident that the fixed idea was anything but dormant within him, for he watched his host's countenance from time to time narrowly, and in the midst of his hilarity and talkativeness there would occasionally flit across his fat face an expression almost of alarm—for Sir Sidney was taciturn, pensive, evidently pre-occupied, drank little, and leant his head on his hand.

"May I pass for a 'suspect,'" the Citizen cried suddenly, laying down his glass, "if I drink another drop."

"What's the matter, Father Latchkey?" asked Mr. Sparkes in French far too ungrammatical to transcribe here. Wine gone the wrong way,—swallowed a fly? Why, you look as if you saw a file in the bottom of your glass, and a bunch of skeleton keys in the Commodore's face."

"May I sneeze in the sawdust" (when a person is guillotined his head falls into a basket full of sawdust) "if the Citizen prisoner of war is not thinking of his Three Muses at this very moment."

The "Three Muses" were three royalist ladies, hiding their real names under the fabulous sobriquets of Thalia, Melpomene,

and Clio, who had long and successfully evaded the pursuit of the police, and who were notoriously continually conspiring to effect the deliverance of Sir Sidney Smith. It should be known that at this period, notwithstanding the sanguinary severity of the Republican Government against the Royalists, France and Paris swarmed with secret emissaries from foreign powers, known as "alarmists," "accapareurs," but more under the generic name of "agents de l'étranger," and by the populace as "Pitt-et-Cobourgs." There were agents from London, from Vienna, from Berlin, and from Amsterdam. There were agents in the army, the navy, the salons, the public offices, the antechambers of the ministry; among the box-openers at theatres, the market-women in the Halle, the coachmen on the stand,—all well supplied with money, all indefatigable in obtaining information, in fomenting reactionary disturbances, in promoting the escape of political prisoners.

I might fill a book with anecdotes of Conrad Kock, the Dutch banker (guillotined); Berthold Proly (guillotined); the two Moravian brothers Frey and their sister Léopoldine; André-Marie Guzman, the Spaniard, who actually so far ingratiated himself into the confidence of Marat that the last letter the famous terrorist ever wrote was to him; Webber, the Englishman, whose mission it was to obtain plans of French fortified towns, and paid twelve thousand francs for one of Douai; one Greenwood, who was specially employed to give dinners to distressed Royalists; Mrs. Knox; and especially the two famous Pitt-et-Cobourgs, Dickson and Winter, who braved the Terror, the Directory, the Consulate, and the Empire, and only gave up business in eighteen hundred and fifteen. It was pretty well known to the police, when our fat friend alluded to the Three Muses, that an intricate and elaborate network of intrigues, plots, and counterplots, existed for the release of Sir Sidney Smith; that neither money nor men were wanting to effect this, should an opportunity occur; and that persons secretly powerful were working night and day to bring that opportunity about. This is why the English Commodore had been so particularly recommended to

Citizen Lasne, and why the fixed idea I have mentioned was so prominent in that patriot's mind.

"You will pardon me, Citizen Commodore," the gaoler continued, rising, but casting a loving look at the decanters; "but I don't like to see you look thoughtful. Thinking means running. I must go and examine all the locks, and order the night-watch to be doubled."

"A man may be thinking of his home and friends, his king and country, without meditating an escape there and then, my good Lasne," Sir Sidney said with a quiet smile.

"Ah!" objected the gaoler, shaking his fat head, "but you've too many friends in Paris, Citizen prisoner. Your king sends too many guineas and spies over here. There are hundreds of them between here and the Rue St. Antoine at this moment, I'll be bound. Very kind indeed to think of your friends, but if you should feel inclined to say *bonjour* to them, my only friend would be Charlot (the public executioner)."

If Citizen Lasne could have spoken English, and have made a pun, he might have said that that only friend would have cut him. But he was a stupid fat man, and could do neither.

"Make your mind easy, my friend," replied Sir Sydney Smith; "I will promise you not to escape to-night."

"You promise! then it's all right. You promise, mind," ejaculated Citizen Lasne, joyfully.

"I give you my word."

"Then give me some more wine," cried this merry fat man. "More porto, Monsieur Spark, my dear, ho, ho!"

With which he sat down, and held out his tumbler with his great fat doughy hand, that looked as if it had just been kneaded, and was ready for the bakehouse.

"More port, more port," grumbled, or pretended to grumble, Mr. Sparkes, filling the bacchanalian's glass to the brim; "what an old forty-stomach it is! He blows his windbags out like a sail. There'll be bellows to mend before long. Here's more port for you."

"'Tis good, my friend, 'tis an exquisite little wine. Yet

a little more. A drop—guggl-gl-gl-gl"—and he continued to drink.

The gaoler knew that Sir Sydney Smith was a man of inflexible honour and integrity; that to him his word as a sailor, a knight, a gentleman, was sacred. So he put the fixed idea out to grass for a time, and drank more port.

But port, though an exquisite little wine, will tell its tale, and have its own way with a man at last, like labour, like age, like death. The Citizen Lasne became very talkative indeed, which showed that he was getting on; then he sang a song, which showed that he was getting further on; then he essayed to dance, which showed that he was getting drunk; then he told a story about a pig in the South of France, and cried, which showed that he was very drunk indeed.

"Citizen Commodore," he said all at once, "would you like to take a walk on the Boulevard?"

At this strange proposition Sir Sydney turned his eyes to the barred window. The rays of the setting sun threw the shadows of the bars upon the wall: the bright light was between, and the gentle breeze of the evening came into the room like the whisper of an angel.

The hum and murmur of the great city came up and smote the captive upon the ear, gently, lovingly, gaily, as though they said "Come, why tarry? you are invited." And the birds were singing outside upon the gloomy terrace where the little Dauphin used to walk.

"Monsieur Lasne," answered the Commodore, stifling a sigh, "there are subjects upon which it is both unjust and cruel to jest."

"But I'm not jesting."

"But do you really mean to say that you would consent—?"

"Once more, would you like to take a walk on the Boulevard?"

"Would you like to take a walk on the Boulevard?" bawled Sparkes, applying his mouth to his master's ear, as though he were deaf.

"If you are speaking seriously," Sir Sidney said at last, "I can but accept the offer with the greatest gratitude."

"Seriously? of course I am," replied Citizen Lasne, rising and shaking off the load of port wine from his fat form, as though it were a cloak, and really succeeding in standing straight. "First, though, let us make our little conditions. No attempts at escape."

"Oh, of course not," replied the Commodore.

"No speaking to any one you meet on the road. No Muses; no words, gestures, not a nod, not a wink."

"I promise all this."

"On the word of an honest man?"

"On the word of an English gentleman," answered the Commodore, firmly.

"Come along then," cried the gaoler, as if perfectly satisfied, linking his arm in that of his prisoner and moving towards the door; "you shall see of what stuff the Boulevards of Paris are made, Citizen Commodore."

Although this fat turnkey had drunk a prodigious quantity of port wine, he did not seem, once on his legs, so very much the worse for liquor. He gave one of his legs a little pat as if to reproach it for having been shaky, and took a last gulp of port by way of a final clench or steadier. Only his little eyes began to flame and sparkle greatly, which from the general dulness of his countenance gave him the appearance of having an evening party inside his head, and having had the windows lighted up.

The pair were going out when Citizen Lasne was aware of Mr. Sparkes, who leaned against the sideboard with his arms folded, looking anything but contented with the general aspect of affairs.

"A Citizen who has poured me out so many tumblers of good wine," said the gaoler, graciously, "deserves some little consideration at my hands. Pass your word for him too, Commodore, and Citizen Spark shall come with us."

"You have my word," Sir Sydney said, laughing. "Sparkes shall make no attempt at escape."

"You might have asked me for *my* word," grumbled Mr. Sparkes. "That would have been quite sufficient. A nice Republican you must be to think that the word of a gentleman's

servant is not as good as that of a gentleman. Is that your fraternity, or equality, or whatever you call it?"

"Liberty, equality, and fraternity," replied Citizen Lasne, with vinous gravity, "are very pretty to look at on the two-sous pieces; but the heart of man is deceitful. However," he added, "may I pass for a *ci-devant*, Citizen Spark, if I think that you would play me false. Citizen, come along. Citizen Secretary (to Captain Wright) I recommend myself to your distinguished consideration till we return. *Au Boulevard!*"

He led the Commodore away, and Sparkes followed close at their heels, as a well-bred gentleman's servant should do. A few minutes afterwards the three were outside the great gate of the Temple. The Commodore had taken care to wrap himself in a cloak, and to slouch his hat over his head. As long as the sun remained on the horizon the party wandered about the Dædalus of narrow little streets which then surrounded, and even now to a certain extent surround, the Temple. As it grew dark, the Commodore proposed that they should take the promised walk on the Boulevard.

Now Citizen Lasne, in regard to liquor, was somewhat of a spongy nature and temperament. He could suck up an astonishing quantity of moisture, but such moisture was very easily expressed by a few minutes' exercise, and then the Citizen was dry, porous, on the alert and ready for more. When Citizen Lasne left the Temple with his prisoners he was considerably more than seven-eighths drunk. He had not been long in the fresh air before the fixed idea began to dominate over his mind with redoubled force. He began to repent of his somewhat too chivalrous confidence in the parole of his captives. He began to repent heartily of his imprudence. He began, finally, like Falstaff, to perceive that he had been an ass; and, worse than all, that he had effected that undesirable metamorphosis himself.

As they walked he scrutinised narrowly the countenances of the passers-by, to see if any marks of recognition passed between them and his companion. And almost incessantly he glanced over his shoulder to assure himself of the whereabout of Citizen

Sparkes. That trusty servant was contented with treading most faithfully upon his gaoler's heels, and with saying, when he caught his eye,

"All right, Citizen—all right."

If the fumes of the wine had been completely, instead of very nearly, evaporated from the cerebellum of Citizen Lasne, he would have remarked a little circumstance which might have led him to entertain very grave suspicious concerning the safety of his prisoners. Ever since the party had quitted the Temple, they had been followed, step by step, by a female figure closely shawled and veiled; and Sir Sidney could distinctly hear, though the gaoler, from a trifling singing and buzzing in his ears, could not, the sound of steps behind them, regularly keeping time with their own.

The night was dark, and Lasne, determined to keep his word at all hazards, proceeded towards the Boulevard. At the moment when the three were turning the angle of the Rue Charlot a hand was laid on the arm of Citizen Sparkes, and a timid voice whispered—

"Monsieur le Comte."

Sparkes turned his head round, without slackening his pace.

"I saw you start," whispered the veiled female; for she was the owner of the hand and voice. "I have informed my sisters. Rochecotte and De Phélippaux are in readiness. One word and the Commodore shall be rescued from the hands of that wretch."

"But the Commodore will not say that word," answered Citizen Sparkes, in very pure and elegant French.

"And in heaven's name, why?"

"He has given his word, as a gentleman, not to attempt to escape to-night."

"And you——" the veiled figure continued.

"Oh, as for me—the Commodore was security for me—but——"

The night grew darker, and darker, and the three strange companions, with the phantom in the veil, were lost in the tumultuous sea of life upon the great Boulevards.

There was no Boulevard des Italiens then; no Rue de la Paix,

no Madeleine, no asphalte pavements, no brilliant Passages, no gas-lamps. But the Boulevards were still the Boulevards, unequalled and unrivalled; the crowds of promenaders and loungers were still the same, though attired in costumes far different from those they wear now. They passed some dozen of theatres; they passed Monsieur Curtius's wax-work exhibition; they passed numberless groups of tight-rope dancers, jugglers, mountebanks, learned dogs, and quack doctors. All at once, just as they had arrived at the spot where the Passage Vendôme has since been constructed, Citizen Lasne uttered an exclamation of horror and surprise.

"By heavens!" he cried, "Spark has disappeared!"

It was but too true, the body servant of Sir Sidney Smith was nowhere to be seen.

In his terror and agitation the unlucky gaoler quite forgot his Republican character. He was within a hair's breadth of making the sign of the cross; but remembering that religion had been done away with according to law long since, he twirled his moustache instead.

"May heaven grant," said the Commodore to himself, "that the poor fellow has really succeeded in making his escape." Then he added, aloud, "Sparkes has no doubt lost us."

"Lost us," cried the concierge furiously, "lost us!—yes, to find himself in London. I am ruined, destroyed. Citizen, Citizen, I am a poor man, the father of a family, I have a head—I know I shall lose it—let us hasten home like the very devil."

He seized the Commodore's arm tightly as he spoke, and quickened his pace; and Sir Sidney had no alternative but to walk as fast as his companion. They ascended the Boulevard, and then rapidly descended the Rue du Temple.

But the tribulations of Citizen Lasne had not yet reached their culminating point. At the top of the Rue Mesaly they found the thoroughfare obstructed by a numerous crowd. Men of equivocal appearance hovered about, and formed suspicious groups. Some carts and barrows had been overturned in the roadway, evidently with the intention of forming a barricade.

Lasne cast round him a desperate look. A gaoler, he scented a conspiracy from afar off.

"And where may you be taking this honest man, Citizen?" asked a man, placing himself directly in Lasne's way. The man wore a coarse blue blouse, but the ill-buttoned collar showed something most suspiciously like a lace shirtfrill beneath.

"Room there!" cried Lasne, to whom despair lent courage.

"You're in a hurry, Citizen Donkey. If I relieve you of the care of that *ci-devant* who is hanging on your arm, don't you think you could walk faster?"

"Room there!" repeated the gaoler in a hoarse voice. "Room, in the name of the Directory, in the name of the Republic——"

"One and invisible?" interrupted the man in the blouse. "We know all about it. Hallo! attention there!"

The groups closed up. Citizen Lasne felt himself hustled, buffetted, half-strangled. Then he was violently dragged down a bye-street, and thrust into a doorway. When he recovered his scattered senses, he was alone—the Commodore had disappeared.

"Oh, my children, my poor children!" murmured Citizen Lasne, pursuing his solitary walk towards the Temple. "What will become of them? Oh, accursed be Pitt and Cobourg! Oh, accursed be the wine of Porto!"

A fat man in a fright is not a pleasant sight to see. He always puts me in mind of a pig just poniarded by the butcher, and running about *in extremis*. The legs of Citizen Lasne quivered under him. A cold perspiration broke out all over him. He felt like a lump of ice in his backbone. The ends of his hair pricked his forehead; the singing in his ears loudened into a yell. The pores of his flesh opened and shut like oysters; and the whole of his inside became incontinently one mass of molten lead.

As he neared the Temple, the opposite sides of the street formed themselves into a horrible proscenium, and in the middle an infernal drama was being acted. He saw, painted all in red, somebody having the hair at the back of his head shaved off by somebody else hideously like M. Sanson, otherwise called Charlot, the public executioner; then somebody being strapped upon a

plank and thrust head downwards between two posts, in the grooves of which ran a huge triangular axe. And the axe fell with a "thud," and somebody's head fell into a red basket full of sawdust, and the fiends that were yelling in his ear called out "Citizen Lasne, Citizen Lasne, agent of Pitt-et-Cobourg." And the devil danced before the theatre, playing upon a pipe.

The unhappy gaoler reached the Temple gate. He rang, and was about to enter, when he heard a voice behind him.

"Will you permit me also to enter, Monsieur Lasne?"

The Citizen could hardly believe his ears. Much harder was it for him to believe his eyes, when turning round, he recognised Sir Sidney Smith.

"May I be consumed" (he used a stronger term than this), cried Citizen Lasne, "if the word of a gentleman is not worth all the bolts and bars in the Temple."

Nothwithstanding his high eulogium upon a gentleman's word, Citizen Lasne did not forget to see the bolts and bars properly secured as soon as he got inside. But a vigorous pressure from without prevented the closing of the great door, and a voice was heard crying,——

"Let me in! let me in! 'Tis I, Sparkes."

"And where the wonder" (he used even a stronger term this time), "do you come from?" asked Citizen Lasne, when the Commodore's body-servant had been admitted.

"Where! why from looking after you to be sure. Do you call this fraternity and equality, locking a man out of his own prison? A pretty country, where, instead of prisoners running away from the gaolers, the gaolers run away from the prisoners."

Citizen Lasne was too delighted at the safe recovery of his prisoners to resent Mr. Sparkes' reproaches. He insisted upon lighting the Commodore to his apartments; he overwhelmed him with compliments and thanks. He positively wanted to embrace him. The Commodore repulsed him gently.

"You owe me nothing, M. Lasne," he said. "I had promised, I have kept my word. But dating from this moment I withdraw my parole."

"Wait till to-morrow," exclaimed Lasne, in a supplicating voice. "Only wait till to-morrow, Commodore, I'm so sleepy."

Mr. Sparkes pinched the arm of Sir Sidney Smith. "Give your word till to-morrow morning," he whispered.

"Well, so be it," pursued the Commodore. "Till to-morrow morning, I will give my word to remain quiet. But after that I shall court the Muses as much as I please."

"I wish to-morrow morning were this day month," murmured Citizen Lasne, as he bid the prisoners good-night and left them to their repose.

"To-morrow morning may bring forth great things, Sir Sidney," remarked Mr. Sparkes, suddenly rising from the body-servant into the friend. "You have kept your word in neither escaping nor planning escape. I have kept the word you gave for me in not escaping. We shall see, we shall see."

The historian relates, with what accuracy I know not, that when Citizen Lasne had retired for good for the night, Mr. Sparkes took off no less than five waistcoats, and also relieved his arms and legs from much superfluous padding; that underneath his red hair he had some closely-cropped silky black locks; that the freckles on his face were removable by no stronger cosmetic than ordinary soap and water; and that in less than one quarter of an hour after the departure of the gaoler, the bluff English body-servant had assumed the likeness of an accomplished French gentleman.

The next morning, very early, a yellow post chaise, drawn by four horses, drove up to the great door of the Temple. On the box sat two individuals, who at a glance could be recognised as gendarmes in plain clothes. Two more gendarmes, but in uniform, descended from the chaise, and assisted to alight no less a personage than Citizen Auger, adjutant-general of the army of Paris.

Shortly afterwards, the Commodore was sent for to the prison lodge, and there he was shown an order, signed by the Minister of the Interior, for the transfer of the persons of Sir Sidney Smith, and his servant, John Sparkes, Anglais, to the military prison of the Abbaye.

"And many a poor fellow have I seen transferred to the prison

of the Abbaye, who has only left it to be shot in the Plaine de Grenelle," murmured Lasne. "However *tout est en règle*,—all is correct. I will just enter the warrant in the books, if you will be kind enough to sign a receipt for the bodies of the prisoners, Citizen Auger."

The Citizen signed his name to the prison register, "Auger, Adjutant-General," followed by a tremendous *paraphe* or flourish. He declined the escort of six men which Lasne was kind enough to offer him, saying that the four gendarmes were sufficient, and that, besides, he would depend on the honour of Sir Sidney Smith not to compromise him. The Commodore begged Lasne to accept the remainder of his stock of port wine, shook hands with him, took an affecting leave of poor Captain Wright, and with Sparkes entered the post-chaise. Citizen Auger followed; the two gendarmes in plain clothes mounted the box, and the carriage drove away. For aught Sir Sidney Smith knew, he was riding to his death.

The next morning the newspapers teemed with accounts of the audacious escape of Commodore Sir Sidney Smith from the prison of the Temple, by means of a forged order of transfer. Citizen Adjutant-General Auger was no other than the proscribed *emigré*, the Marquis de Rochecotte, and the gendarmes were doubtless agents of the indefatigable Pitt-et-Cobourg. As for Mr. John Sparkes, it was subsequently elicited that he was a certain Count de Tergorouac, a nobleman of Brittany, who had resided for a long time in England, and to whom it had luckily occurred, when taken prisoner, to assume the disguise of an Englishman.

The French police performed prodigies of strategy to arrest the fugitives, but all in vain. They reached Calais, crossed the Channel in a smuggling-vessel, and arrived safely in England.

As for Citizen Lasne, he could come to no harm; for, though the order was forged, the signature of the minister appended to it was undoubtedly genuine. It was never known by what stratagem the signature had been obtained. The fat Citizen finished the Commodore's port wine gaily, and drank his health, and that of "ce digne Spark," in their now unoccupied Chambers in the Temple.

VII.

A JACKDAW UPON A WEDDING.

BOUT the middle of the last century there was written, by one of the masters of Westminster School, a delightful little poem concerning a jackdaw. The master's patronymic was Bourne; and he could not have been very much hated by the Westminster boys of the time as a pedagogue, or as a man, since they and all his contemporaries agreed to change his Christian name of Vincent into the affectionate diminutive of "Vinny." The "Jackdaw" was composed originally in the Latin tongue; but it was translated—and very exquisitely translated, too—into our vernacular by William Cowper. It is, I conscientiously believe, the very sweetest little canzonet that ever was penned. When you have once read it, you must needs read it again; and then perforce you must learn it by heart, and after that it remains indelibly fixed upon your memory. No one ever forgot the "Jackdaw" who could once repeat it without book. The gravest, loftiest minds have loved so to dwell upon its simple verse and kind philosophy. There was a potent, learned divine who lay a dying, and in his laboured breathing was observed trying to repeat something. They put their ears to his lips, expecting to hear the expression of some last solemn wish. No; he was only murmuring a stanza—*the* stanza—from Vinny Bourne's "Jackdaw." When that true American gentleman, Mr. Richard Rush, was Minister from the United States to this country, he dined frequently with George Canning; and he tells us that on one occasion—the times were dark and troublous—the Minister of State, who had been through-

out dinner and dessert silent and preoccupied, began playing with his nutcrackers, and softly muttering :

"There is a bird who by his note,
And by the blackness of his coat,
You might suppose a crow;
A strict frequenter of a church,
Where, bishop-like, he finds a perch,
And dormitory too."

They were the opening lines of the "Jackdaw." I would transcribe the entire poem, but that you can buy Vinny Bourne's whole works for ninepence on any bookstall, and am sanguine enough to hope that by the time you and I become better acquainted, you will be able to recite the "Jackdaw" more trippingly than the reminiscent. For the nonce it is but needful for you to listen to the penultimate stanza. The philosophic, bishop-looking, black-coated bird is sitting, "secure and at his ease," at the top of the church-steeple, whence he surveys "the bustle and the raree-show that occupy mankind below" him :—

"He sees that this great round-about,
The world, and all its motley rout,
Church, army, physic, law—
Its customs and its bus'nesses,
Is no concern at all of his,
And says :—what says he?—'Caw!'"

Then, I come to the point at once. It is my signal privilege, at ten o'clock in the morning of Tuesday, the Tenth of March, 1863, to occupy the secure and easy position of Vinny Bourne's bird. If I am not on the summit of the steeple it is because there is no steeple, but many pinnacles, to St. George's Chapel, Windsor, and standing ground on any one of them would merely afford me a view of the castle-yard, and the Great Park, and Eton's antique spires, and old Upton church far beyond : things all very charming in their way, but of which I do not, on this instant March morning, desire to take cognizance. I have a better point of espial than "the plate which turns and turns to indicate from what side blows the weather." I am perched high up in the organ-loft of the chapel of Saint George, whence in perfect security and

ease I can behold the "bustle and the raree-show," occupying the Court of England below.

Yes; there they all are in one great motley round-about—"church, army, physic, law," and I have nothing whatever to do with them. Their customs and their business are no concern at all of mine, save in so far that with a voice more or less harsh and croaking, I am expected to say "caw:" and that that simple criticism will be uttered with a beak dipped in ink, and held in close proximity to sundry slips of paper; and that, this coming night, sundry industrious persons called compositors will transfer my discordant note to mellifluous expression in movable types, and will bind it up in "chases," and spread it upon the back of "turtles," and lay it upon a machine, and whirl it round on steam cylinders, and emboss it upon paper, and sell it, so printed and embossed, for pieces of money, to the Egyptians—that is to say, to the British public, who, to the extent of as many thousands or millions who choose to run may read my "cawing" to their hearts content in to-morrow morning's papers.

I am bidden to the marriage of Albert Edward Prince of Wales with the Princess Alexandra of Denmark, to whom, both, long life and happiness is the jackdaw's wish. The Lord Chamberlain asked me; and yet, he *didn't* bid me to the marriage. His card says nothing at all about a wedding. He had not "the honour to request my presence." His lordship was not "favoured with the Queen's commands"—at least, he made no intimation to me of the fact—to do so. I was merely asked as a jackdaw. "Come," said, or seemed to say, Lord Sydney, and survey the raree-show, "from ten in the morning till half-past one. If you were a member of the Upper Ten Thousand, you should have a striped ticket, nearly as big as an Algerian burnous, for the Nave of Saint George's Chapel. If you were one of the Upper Five Hundred you should have a special invite to the Choir. Under those circumstances I should expect you to come in your Robes, or your Collar, or your Stars, or your Garters. You should be conducted to your stall, or your seat on the haut pas, by vice-chamberlains and gentlemen-ushers. Nay, in special instances your arrival should be

announced by a flourish of trumpets, and the gentlemen-at-arms should present partisans as you passed. Court carriages should convey you to and from the chapel, and after the ceremony you should find a gold-handled knife and fork laid for you at the state collation in the Waterloo Gallery. But, as you are only a jackdaw, just wing your airy flight with this blue ticket to the part of the chapel you know is set apart for you and your brood, and, confound you, keep a still tongue in your head, till it is time to say 'caw.'"

It was delightful for a thoughtful but indolent sight-seer to be permitted to witness such a ceremonial at so slight an expenditure of trouble. There was no intriguing for tickets. There were no carking fears lest you should be put behind a pillow, or a voluminous dowager with a back as broad and as opaque as the organ itself. There was no nervousness as to how you were to acquit yourself in the part you had to play in a court pageant. Very recently I heard of a poor little captain in a marching regiment who had as yet never been presented at Court, but who was going to the Prince's levee. He had been through the Crimean and the Indian campaigns, yet he was frightened out of his wits at the thought of the dreadful ordeal he was fated to undergo at St. James's. His mamma wrote in an agony of perturbation to a fashionable dancing mistress; and the captain had half a dozen lessons, at a guinea each, in the art of kneeling, kissing hands, bowing, and backing out of the Presence. His sister went through days of preparation, quite as solemn and elaborate, with the view to the Princess Royal's drawing-room, and goodness only knows how many times she practised, for the edification of her lady's-maid, the art and mystery of throwing her train over her arm.

I think that, were it my terrible doom to be presented at Court, I should die. I should probably trip myself up with my sword, if I didn't fall upon its point, bodily, like an ancient Roman. The nervousness which leads me to crumble my bread at dinner—when there are any grand folks present—would certainly compel me to pull my frill and my ruffles into rags. And, good gracious! what should I do in shorts and silken shanks?

From my jackdaw perch in the loft I caught sight of Mr.

William Powell Frith, Royal Academician, painter of the best scenes of English social life we have seen since the days of William Hogarth, ensconced, with his sketch-book, in a snug corner to the north of the altar, whence he was to make a draught of the bridal ceremony for his forthcoming grand picture, commissioned by the Queen. Mr. Frith was in shorts and silken shanks, in snuff-colour and steel buttons, in a bag, and a brocaded waistcoat, in a frill and ruffles. I am sure he didn't like it. I hope he didn't catch cold. I turned, after surveying him, with a sensation—not entirely devoid of selfishness—of infinite relief, to my brother jackdaws, one of whom was clad in a suit of tweed, well shrunk, cut sporting fashion; another, wearing a rough great-coat; a third, an Inverness cape, and so forth, to the extent of about a dozen jackdaws congregated in the loft to the left of the organ.

The particular daw who has the honour to be cawing at the present moment was slightly more courtly in his apparel. He—that is, I—had been at a solemn dinner in London the night before, and had just time to catch the last train—the midnight one—on the Great Western, for Windsor. I was afraid, you see, of oversleeping myself in the morning, so had determined to catch time by the forelock, and to be the early bird that picked up the worm. I went down in full evening dress and white cravat, and I punctually left the black bag which contained my change of apparel in the hansom which conveyed me to Paddington. There was no help for it, at ten o'clock the next morning, but to present myself at the southern porch of Saint George's Chapel in the same costume—under which sumptuary condition I must have looked, I fancy, like an undertaker out for a holiday.

There was a compact crowd of ladies and gentlemen, provided with tickets for the nave, who were waiting, in a very operatic manner, for the doors to open, at this same southern entrance. I was enabled to gaze upon some of the most resplendent bonnets, some of the most startling waistcoats, to be found in Christendom. I believe Mr. Poole, the tailor, was himself present in the nave, and, if such be the case, he must have reviewed, with pardonable pride, the triumphs effected among the dandies present through

the agency of his shears and French chalk. Many middle-class milliners might have been driven mad with envy to see the modes displayed in that brilliant crowd. I am not learned in haberdashery myself. I scarcely know a *ruche* from a *bouillonné*, a gore from a gusset, and I am certain that I can't discern the difference between a silk *glacé* and a silk *chiné*. My acquaintance with bonnets is limited to an impression that they cost from forty-five to fifty-five shillings apiece, and that they last, on an average and with great care and caution, ten days.

Ignorant, however, as I may be of such fripperies, I was compelled to render homage to the dazzling and parterre-like prettiness of the toilettes I saw around me. There were pretty faces, too, in abundance, and many of the younger ladies had dressed their hair Alexandra fashion—which was most delectable to view : only the sharp, clear, spring morning light, in combination with the immutable laws of refraction, made the violet powder, applied with so liberal a hand to the cheek of beauty, rather too apparent. Modern ladies, like works of the old masters, need a particular, subdued, and chastened light. I was pleased also to remark that a good number of the gentlemen had adopted the Danish colours in their cravats, which had a genial lobster salad-like appearance. Beshrew that hansom cabman who drove away so deftly with my black bag! I too had provided a waistcoat, a scarf of many colours, gloves of the lightest lavender, and here I was in a tail-coat and continuations of rusty black. I was glad when the southern door began to creak on its portals, and at last groaned on one side, and I could quit the butterfly throng and join my brother jackdaws.

The policeman to whom I showed my blue ticket bestowed on me a confidential wink, and pointed his left-hand Berlin-wool-gloved thumb over his corresponding shoulder. I knew my goal well enough. I had been down to Windsor on the preceding Thursday, and tramped about the chapel, and peered into the knights' stalls, and clambered up into the rookery which I knew had been provided for us. So I left the gilded butterflies settling down on their red benches in the nave, and crossed its pavement into the shadow of a chapel, and so found a narrow door open,

guarded by another policeman, and climbed up the steep old stairs into the loft to the left of the organ. On an exact level with this gallery, at the opposite extremity of the chapel, was the antique pew or closet which was to be occupied, during the wedding, by the Queen. In the loft answering to ours on the other side of the organ were some choristers, male and female, amongst whom we jackdaws were not long in recognising Jenny Lind and Louisa Pyne.

Has it ever struck you, at a great criminal trial, that the person who has the very best and most comfortable view of the entire proceedings, is the prisoner in the dock? The judge is crowded and jostled by high sheriffs and county magnates, who claim a right to sit on the bench. The barristers' table overflows with briefless ones. The floor of the court is packed. The gallery is inconveniently thronged with ladies, with their double-barrelled lorgnettes, anxious to scrutinise the fashionable murderer; but the gentleman behind the spikes, and with the rue before him, has ample scope and verge enough. He and the turnkey and the governor of the jail have a comfortable boarded area all to themselves. No overcrowding *them*. Analogically, we poor despised jackdaws had the most commodious reserved seats in the whole chapel. We were out of the pale, and yet we sat in the high places. None were so poor as to do us reverence, yet we could look down at our leisure upon the seething, fluttering mass of robes and trains, plumes and diamonds, lace and embroidery.

We paced tranquilly up and down our eyrie. One of my brethren, who knows the Peerage by heart, regaled me with choice anecdotes of the private lives of the aristocracy. Another, who is learned in ecclesiology, descanted upon the alabaster sculptures of the reredos, and explained the differences between the decorations worn by the Prelate, the Chancellor, and the Registrar of the Garter. A third, who had been ailing lately, came and talked to me about his complaint; and we compared symptoms, and defended various modes of regimen, and criticised our respective doctors. One jackdaw, the wisest one in the group, had brought a sandwich-box and a flask of sherry with him, and proceeded to invite him-

self to an early lunch. Another began to read "No Name." Another went to sleep till the grand doings should begin; but, being troubled in his slumbers, speedily woke up with a yelp which somewhat frightened the decorous echoes of the old chapel from their propriety.

High-perched as we were, however, our sanctum was once or twice menaced with invasion. There came straying towards us, from the choristers' loft, and across the isthmus occupied by the organ itself, the longest and most disconsolate clergyman and the shortest and cheerfullest lady I have seen for a long time. They had been unceremoniously ejected from among the singing men and women, as having no right there. Then they turned up among her Majesty's private band, and her Majesty's private band would have nothing to do with them. After that they had been pounced upon by an elderly gentleman, whom I conjectured to have been in some way attached to the Royal Household. "You cannot possibly remain here," cried the elderly gentleman. "My orders are imperative to suffer none unprovided with tickets to remain in this compartment." We heard the long clergyman disconsolately pleading, and the short lady cheerfully expostulating, against expulsion. But in vain. The elderly gentleman grew so angry, and the sense of the imperative nature of his orders assumed such alarming dimensions, that I feared he would swiftly cut all further discussion short by hurling the intruders over the gallery into the nave. At last they came stumbling across the organ isthmus, the lady's lace shawl catching at all the stop-handles, and woefully discomposing Dr. Elvey in his scarlet panoply of a Mus. Doc., Oxon. Of course they couldn't remain *there:* the Mus. Doc. would have told them the reason why in the twinkling of a pedal: so over they came to us, painfully but resolutely clambering, as though they were members of the Alpine Club.

I regret to say that from the jackdaws they received but little hospitality. It appears they had had tickets for a stone gallery running behind the carved pinnacles of the Knights of the Garter's stalls, whence they could see nothing but the backs of the said pinnacles, a few emblazoned banners and sham coronets, and a

limited space of groined and vaulted roof. Thence they had half strayed, half climbed into the regions of the organ-loft. I was very sorry for the long clergyman, who was so gaily attired and wore so miserable a mien that he looked as though he were about to be married himself. "Sit down," I whispered, "and keep as quiet as ever you can, and when the processions begin everybody will be too busy to trouble themselves about you." "But the lady?" he pathetically interposed. "Say she is a jackdaw," I responded; "say she belongs to the *Lady's Newspaper*."

I regarded this as a master-stroke of stratagem; but, alas! it proved unavailing to secure immunity for a very inoffensive lady and gentleman. One of my brethren—a stout jackdaw, a severe jackdaw—became aware of them. He flapped his wings and croaked ominously. Then, with a grim purpose in his beak, he hopped down stairs, and returning brought with him an amazing Court official, a halcyon creature, with radiant plumage, an ethereal being who had seemingly been running after Fortune's chariot, and had been splashed with the gold from her wheels. His face was fair and placid, but terrible to gaze upon in its serene inflexibility. When he bracketed his eye-glass upon you he became, not a Court official, but a basilisk. The offenders were pointed out to him. "You cannot possibly remain here;" thus he repeated the formula, but with a silvery lisp that was far awfuller than the angry tones of the elderly gentleman opposite. Slowly and gently, but irresistibly, he beckoned the interlopers away. Slowly but sadly they withdrew from the cruel jackdaws' nest—and what became of them afterwards, whether they subsided into Sir Reginald Bray's chapel, or into one of the vaults, I know not. They disappeared, and I saw them no more.

I am bound to admit that the Court official was the most condescending and obliging of his species. The stern dictates of duty being satisfied, and justice done on the guilty, he over-brimmed with tender kindness. "Was there anything more he could do for us?" "Yes; there was," the stout and severe jackdaw remarked. "Would he send us a policeman to keep watch and ward at the entrance of our nest, to protect us from the possibility

of further intrusion?" Certainly. We should have lots of policemen. Was there anything else? Well, we wanted some more programmes, plans of the dais, and "Orders of the Solemnisation of Matrimony," bound in white watered silk, and decorated with the royal arms—less, I apprehend, for purposes of devotional study than for presentation, as mementoes of the auspicious day, to certain lady daws at home. Certainly. He would send us up lots of programmes. Anything else?

He was so very obliging, that I was on the point of drawing his attention to the fact that we had all breakfasted very early, that we hadn't all been so provident as to bring sandwich-boxes and pocket-flasks with us, and that a neat tray, garnished with a cold chicken or two, and flanked with a decanter or so of wine, would be a most agreeable addition to our comfort; but just as I was nerving myself to proffer this, perhaps, bold request, the optic muscle of the Court official refused to retain its grip on the rim of his eye-glass any longer. Down fell the lorgnon, and hung pendent; and down came the official from the ethereal spheres. Without his eye-glass he was mortal, without it he was by no means kind or condescending; nay, after an abortive effort or two to refix the refractory lens, he turned on his heel in an abrupt, not to say savage, manner, and left us all in the lurch and the loft.

He only sent us up two programmes, for which we had to battle, eke with beak and bill; and instead of "lots" of policemen there only came to us one constable, a most obtuse and chuckle-headed functionary, who seemed, first, to be pervaded by an impression that it was his duty to take us all into custody, asking, with vacuous asperity, "Wot we were all a doin' of there?" When it was with difficulty explained to him that he was to be for the time our servitor and henchman, he sank into mere inert sulkiness, and carving out for himself, with his elbows, a front place at the railing overlooking the choir, concentrated his energies during the remainder of the forenoon in getting as good a view of the show as ever he could without troubling himself about us.

Now was it—that is to say about eleven of the clock—that there came into the loft one with an air of authority, and who evidently

cared not a fico for all the Court officials in creation. The policeman's back was towards him as he entered, else he, too, might have been summoned to tell "wot he wos a doin' of." We jackdaws cared not to question him; for he came not, evidently, as a sight-seer. He peeped not into the nave. He glanced not into the choir. His stay was but a span of the briefest. He bobbed his powdered head and disappeared from our nest. Whither? That you shall hear presently. Let it be borne in mind that he was an old old gentleman, who looked eighty, and was, probably, not far off from a hundred. His head was of the John Anderson my Jo pattern—a "frosty pow" like a bride-cake. Snowy and spreading were the bows of his neckcloth. Raven black was his attire; small-clothes wore he and trim hose of black silk—you know, the semi-transparent silk that allows the legs beneath to show through in a pale kidney colour. I believe he had shoe-buckles. He wore a prodigious bridal favour.

Who is this old gentleman? I asked myself, wondering. Is he the oldest inhabitant of Windsor, privileged to witness the wedding by virtue of his seniority? Is he the Lord Chamberlain's great grandfather? Is he the ghost of George the Third? (He was not unlike George the Third.) Thus was I musing when the "frosty pow" bobbed, and its owner vanished. We rubbed our eyes at the astounding disappearance, for he was a dozen paces from the door, and had clearly not descended the staircase. Neither had he crossed the isthmus in front to the choristers' loft. Still I wondered and pondered, till, by the side of the organ, I became aware that there was railed off from us a certain pit, or grave. I looked over the rail and saw that the bottom of this pit was boarded, and that a little ladder led down to it, and that it was down this ladder, after bobbing under the rail, that the old old gentleman had trotted. But what was he doing there? He sat on a little stool, like patience in a coal-hole, smiling at nothing at all, except cobwebs. The level of the trench was a good four feet above his head, and, beyond a ray of light that glinted on his powdered sconce, darkness encompassed him.

So sat he in this tenebrous abyss, a mystery and a marvel to me.

I likened him to Truth at the bottom of a well, to the gravedigger in Hamlet, to a toad in a hole. I fancied that he was a manhater, or had been permitted to expiate some dreadful crime by self-interment. The fact is, that I could make nothing at all of him, till Dr. Elvey began to play a triumphal march on the great organ. Then I heard a rumbling and a grumbling and a sighing in the regions below the railing. I looked over, and saw far down in the pit the old old gentleman hard at work—at hard labour rather, to which the crank in county gaol must be a joke. Eureka! I had discovered it all. *The old gentleman was the man who blew the bellows.*

He must have been a philosopher. He could see nothing of the brave pageant. Rustling robes and swaling plume and spangled sheen of heraldry were nought to him. It was his business to blow the bellows. Mourning or rejoicing—burial or bridal—wedding chorale or the Dead March in Saul, what difference made they to his flexors and extensors? He was called upon neither to weep nor to laugh, but simply to go on blowing the bellows. Te Deum and De Profundis, Nunc Dimittis and Dies Iræ, anthem and psalm and voluntary, he had been blowing away for heaven knows how many years. Father Schmidt, who built the organ, and Purcell, and Handel, and Haydn, who may have fingered its keys, were all very great men, and so is, doubtless, the Maestro Elvey, Mus. Doc., Oxon.; but none of them could have discoursed sweet or solemn music in the chapel of Saint George without the assistance of him who blew the bellows. Did he blow when George the Third died, I wonder? I fancy that I had met with him once before, and that it was he who blew when I came into this self-same chapel fifteen months ago to see a sad, sad, princely burial.*

But matters more pregnant speedily called me away from old Timotheus—if the venerable blower will pardon my thus personifying him as a reminiscence from John Dryden's great ode. The chapel had begun to fill. The great business of the day had commenced. The jackdaws began to hop; for they had a couple of weathercocks to perch upon between their hops. Sure, never was there a stranger contrast of chiaro-oscuro than that double vista

* That of the Prince Consort in December, 1861.

afforded. It was like the fabled Russian bath—not the real one, by any means—the bath of violent transition where you rush out of the red-hot vapour to roll yourself in the snow.

Take the nave first. I peered down at it, and saw all, bright, sparkling, spick and span new. You know how the clustered columns have been scrubbed, and spruced, and furbished up recently; how a new pavement has been laid; how new stained glass has been put into old mullions; how the antique roof has been picked out with new colours and gilding. The nave of Saint George's looks in truth as jaunty and dandified as does that fairy fane of imperishable beauty—that monument of Youth eternal—the Duomo at Milan. To add to the nave's newness to-day, there was its centre decorated with a blush-new carpet woven with the cognizance and cipher of the young couple. Its grand western portal was hung with a rich, heavy drapery of velvet; and beyond that, you—I, rather, was aware, from the foregone conclusion of ocular inspection, there stretched a suit of improvised reception saloons, moist and garish from the upholsterer's and decorator's hands. Nothing, in this part of the home of the Tudors and Plantagenets, had an older date than the middle of last week. Even in that south-west corner, where, concealed by a towering range of red baize seats, I knew the mortuary chapel of the poor Princess Charlotte ought to be, the genius of modern, not mediæval, art was triumphant. There, the best materials and the worst taste were lavished. There, badly stained glass cast a theatrical coloured glow over a clumsily grouped mass of sculpture.

Then my orbs travelled back, and I surveyed the people gathered together on the baize forms. With their iron-work arm-rests, those forms had an odd resemblance to the amphitheatre stalls at that newest-looking of new theatres, the Royal Italian Opera. The audience had a lyrico-dramatico-inclined look. They reminded you of orchestral block B at the Crystal Palace. They seemed to be waiting for a festival of the Tonic Sol-fa Association. They had a Horticultural Show or Great Exhibition aspect. Their attires were of the concert-room, not the cathedral. They were as new as the bonnets and waistcoats they wore. The newest spring

fashions had been brought to bear on their attire. Some of them may have been made new to all time—"beautiful for ever"—by the Hebrew maiden who, according to her own showing, has become the lessee of the Fontaine de Jouvence. The very colours that glowed in their garments were of new discovery—novel chemical extracts from organic nastinesses as old as the hills—mauves, magentas, and maizes, and cerises.

I saw beneath me the Modern Perishable Time—the shimmering lacquered veneer upon Eternity's pine-plank. I looked down upon a generation that travelled by first-class express, that rode in miniature broughams; that lived in semi-detached villas, that worshipped at proprietary chapels, that dined *à la Russe* and had left off supping altogether; that sent its girls to be educated at ladies' colleges, and its boys at gymnasia; that wondered at its servant-maids when they consulted "cunning men," or crossed the hands of gipsy crones with silver, yet went itself to spirit-rapping *séances*, and sat at the feet of lying mediums—a generation that was learned in the Origin of Species, and the Theory of Development, and the Common Objects of the Sea-shore, but didn't know how to make pies or puddings, and had forgotten the art of darning stockings—a generation complacently willing to hold with Professor Boofs or Dr. MacDiluvius that Father Adam was a hundred and twenty-six feet high and thirty thousand years old, but which was far too well educated to believe in Noah's Ark or the Burning Bush. O smiling, flirting, gossipping, sceptical, well-dressed, well-educated generation, go your ways for I can make nothing at all of you! So I turn upon my claw, and strain my eyes to see what I can see in the choir of Saint George's Chapel.

It was like rising, with a yawn, from the pert verbiage and flippant repetitions of the "Court Circular" to plunge into the pages of Froissart. He, and Monstrelet, and Brantôme, and old Baker—ay, and Camden, and Holinshed, and Stow—seemed to have kept guard at the gates of the inner chapel to bar ingress to the impertinent moderns. Error and exaggeration! you may cry out: nothing is safe from the invasion of the Vandals. These Danish and Russian officers in fat bullion epaulettes and wasp-

waisted tunics, these officials in Windsor uniforms, these great Court ladies in spreading trains, do they not also belong to the generation you have quitted, and, in quitting, disparaged—the generation that delights in gold lace, Brussels lace, varnished boots, and mauve and magenta hues? I answer that all is subdued, refined, ripened, sobered, mellowed, antiquated, harmonised, here, by the great pervading shadow of the Order of the Garter.

That famous companionship of ancient chivalry is omnipresent in the choir. What though I know those carved pinnacled canopies over the knights' stalls are not all of mediæval oak, but have been patched and cobbled up during the Georgian era? What though I confess that many of the banners hanging from the roof are of the emblazonment of modern herald painters? What though I remember that yon sculptured screen of alabaster, and yon great painted window, are things of yesterday, and that among the worn and half illegible brasses nailed behind the knights' seats, and telling in quaint old Norman-French of Bohuns, De Montforts, and De Courcys, whose blood has been quite dried up for centuries past, there are new, primly shining brass plates, as bright and natty as any house decorator or seal engraver, aping the mediæval, might screw on to his door—plates that give the names and addresses of German kings and princes, of an Emperor of the French, of a King of Sardinia, and of a Sultan of the Turks, yet does the antique Garter shadow, swallow up, and make all chime in with the chivalric departed.

The temporary seats of red baize, that looked coarse and Cremorne-like in the choir, are here toned down to a dull ruby tint. The group of bishops, and deans, and canons behind the communion-rails don't look like the mere surpliced parsons of Lutheran rites. Over some of their vestments are thrown robes of blood-coloured silk, with the Garter's badge 'broidered on the shoulder. I am glad that I am short-sighted, and that I cannot discern whether his grace of Canterbury wears a wig. I hope he doesn't. The flock of clergymen "compose"—to use a painter's term—so well, and are in such excellent "keeping," that I fancy I see glimmering there to the north a throng of priests in stoles,

and rochets, and copes, stiff with gold and embroidery—that I can see the golden crosiers glisten, the jewelled mitres sparkle, the episcopal rings scintillate. How brave the pattens and chalices gleam on the table! There are candlesticks. How about the tapers? Are there to be any wax lights? But hush! Avaunt, ye mummeries of papistry! Behind me I hear a harsh, irate croaking.

A Low Church, Calvinist, Caledonian jackdaw is inveighing against the sinful conduct of the corporation of London on the Seventh of March, in permitting Mr. Rimmel, the perfumer, to erect his tripodical incense-burners on London Bridge. "A sad and gloomy day will it be, indeed, for England," says the Calvinist jackdaw, "if incense is to become one of the institutions of this Protestant land." A sad and gloomy day indeed! The Inquisition, thumbscrews, the chop on Tower Hill, and the stake in Smithfield, would all follow as a matter of course, and in the twinkling of a censer. The Calvinistic jackdaw is implacable. "There has been too much of this sort of thing lately," he says. "A stop must be put to it. The public pulse must be felt. The public voice must be heard." He is only appeased when I point out to him that her grace the Duchess of Inverness, with a tartan mantle thrown over her, has just been conducted to her seat. "Scotia" is satisfied, and the incense grievance is temporarily dismissed.

When, one after another, the grandees had swept into the choir and settled down in their stalls or on their benches, when the chapel proper was full, and the Royal Family procession had been followed by that of the bridegroom, and that royal young gentleman stood apart on the dais waiting for his bride, I would, did etiquette—to say nothing of natural history—permit a jackdaw to have hands, have clapped them for sheer joy and exultation. As it was, I flapped my wings to the discomposure of my neighbours, and was nearly crying "caw" before my time. In a low whisper I asked the policeman who should have been our sentinel, but had so comfortably installed himself in a front seat, what he thought of the whole thing. He said it was "stunning." I am of that policeman's forcible, albeit ungrammatical, opinion. It was about

the most "stunning" sight I ever looked upon in my life, or that I am ever likely to look upon again.

I remember, as a very little boy, being taken to see the coronation procession of Queen Victoria. I thought that exceedingly grand. I was transported with melodramatic admiration when, a couple of years later, I had, as a French school-boy, a holiday and an opportunity of witnessing the funeral train of the Great Napoleon dragging its slow length towards the Invalides. The college I belonged to had, in the days of the first Empire, been called the Lycée Bonaparte, and we were, in that college, eight hundred staunch Imperialists. Of other raree-shows I have seen dozens, scores, if not hundreds, in my jackdaw time, and cawed about them *ad nauseam*; but the bravest raree-show of all, the grandest, the handsomest, and the noblest, was, and ever will be to me, the marriage of Albert Edward Prince of Wales.

Why? Common-sense comes up with a custom-house officer's probe and begins to puncture me as to any contraband sentimentality I may have about me. Why brave, why grand, why handsome, why noble? Why should I yearn to clap my hands and cry "caw!" intempestively? Have I never been to the Grand Opera? Have I never seen a ballet at the Scala? Have the splendours of the coronation scene in the "Prophète" been wasted upon me? Is there anything in the way of splendour here that a sagacious theatrical manager, with the assistance of an experienced super-master and an unlimited balance at his bankers, could not accomplish? Nay, there are incongruities and anomalies apparent here, which would be banished from a spectacle at Covent Garden or Drury Lane.

Take the heralds, for example. Here are Garter King of Arms, and all his mystic brethren, kings, heralds, and pursuivants: Norroy and Clarencieux, Rouge Croix, Rouge Dragon, Portcullis, and Blue Mantle, "with hues as lively and appellations as quaint as the attendants on a fairy court." "For gorgeousness of attire, mysteriousness of origin, and, in fact, for similarity of origin," says the author I have just quoted, the late Mr. Leigh Hunt, "a knave at cards is not unlike a herald." A story is told of an Irish King

of Arms who, waiting on the Bishop of Killaloe to summon him to Parliament, and being dressed, as the ceremony required, in his heraldic attire, so mystified the bishop's servant with his appearance, that, not knowing what to make of it, and carrying off but a confused notion of his title, he announced him thus: "My lord, here is the King of Trumps."

I know that Garter King of Arms is not a king at all, that his crown and his sceptre are the merest gewgaws, and that he is an estimable old gentleman who got his berth from the Duke of Norfolk, and derives a comfortable income from fees paid into his office on Benet's Hill, Doctor's Commons. I know that if I chose to have my "arms found," I can get a painted sheet of parchment from the Herald's College for fifty pounds; that if I chose to find them for myself, I can do so at no more expense than paying a few shillings a year to the tax-gatherer, if he discovers that I am in the habit of using armorial bearings, which in nine cases out of ten he does not. I know that probably three out of the five hundred ladies in the nave "found" their arms in this easy and uncostly manner; and I know that if I elect to assume the heraldic cognisance worn five hundred years ago by my forefathers at five hundred miles' distance from the jurisdiction of the Herald's College, or—which is perhaps the more sensible plan—to adopt no coat of arms, crest or motto at all, there is no man, true or false herald, who shall legally interfere with me.

And, finally, I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that the "King of Trumps" panoply—the firework tabard, or san benito, all scrawled over with coats of arms, is an absurd and egregious one, and is, when taken in conjunction with the pantaloons and patent leathers of ordinary life, utterly ridiculous and preposterous. I know that the last time the heralds were seen in the open air, and at Charing Cross, mounted on dobbins from Astley's, and pretending to blow trumpets they couldn't extract so much as a whistle from, the little boys hooted them, and *The Times* newspaper laughed them to scorn. Why am I impressed, now, by Garter and Norroy, Clarencieux and Rouge Dragon, Portcullis and Blue Mantle?

Take the Knights of the Garter, to pursue the course of disillusion. It is patent to me that Signor Mario as John of Léyden, and the late Signor Lablache as Marino Faliero, looked much grander in their tinselled trappings than any K.G. I cannot shut my eyes to the fact that one of the K.G.s beneath me has a red head, and another wears spectacles, and that two or three more are visibly paralytic. I can't help remembering that some of these dignitaries have been foisted into their stalls by the merest "flukes," and on the purest "any-other-man" principles. Common-sense dins inexorably in my ears that there have been K.G.s who have pawned their plate and rooked their creditors. After all, the robes of the Garter, splendid as they are, can be bought for shillings and pence at the corner of Chancery Lane. After all, I have been to Madame Tussaud's, and have seen, all threadbare, blackened, and tarnished, the coronation robes of George the Fourth. After all, there are theatrical costumiers in Bow Street and Vinegar Yard. A Knight of the Garter, in full fig, looks very much like a Blue-coat boy *in excelsis*. Does he? Common-sense may tell me so, but I don't believe it. Why don't I?

And the yeomen of the guard, who, but the other day, were serjeant-majors in marching regiments! And the gentlemen-at-arms, with golden Loysel's percolators on their heads, and bearing gilt maypoles surmounted by hatchets never meant to cut anything! And the trumpeters in jockey caps and brocaded coats! And the ladies with tails to their gowns ten feet long! And the cocked-hats, the aiguillettes, the ostrich feathers, the lappets, the epaulettes, the stars and the crosses, glittering and glistening on every side! There are a dozen historical anachronisms in every square yard of this pageantry. Why does it all send me half crazy with excitement, and half-stupified with admiration?

A jackdaw may shrug his shoulders without derogating from his ornithological conditions. Let me shrug mine. What have I to say to common-sense in this matter? Well, not much. "Caw!" All these jarring customs and businesses are no concern at all of mine. As they float upwards to me they become

homogeneous, and I can caw forth my approbation in spirit and in truth. If I have anything more to say to common-sense, it is this: That the show, after all, was a wedding between two charming and handsome young people, and, consequently, an affair with which common-sense can have positively nothing to do; and, finally, that the most inveterate grumbler, that the most determined cynic, that the most splenetic railer at the follies and fripperies of this world, must have been disarmed, tongue-tied, and demolished had he been situated as I—a humble jackdaw was—on that auspicious morning; for directly over against our gallery, at the south-eastern extremity of the chapel, there was that same pew, or closet, I spoke of before, high up in the wall over the altar—a dusky, musty nook, first built, I have heard, in Henry the Seventh's time, but swept and garnished and hung with tapestry for this grand joining-of-hands pageant, and therein sat the forlorn lady, dark and dreary in her persistent weeds, Victoria the Queen. And that was why, perhaps, I cawed, and caw now, with bated breath, and bade common-sense get behind me.

And the wedding itself? Well, you must know all its details by this time quite as well as, if not much better than I do myself. It was very much like other weddings that you and I and all the world have witnessed; only the major part of humanity do not attend the hymeneal altar in robes of blue velvet, or with their trains held up by eight young ladies, daughters of earls. The pretty bride trembled a good deal, but, so far as my jackdaw eyes could perceive, she did not cry. The bridegroom went through his part in a business-like manner—as, indeed, why should he not have so comported himself, seeing that it was his business to stand up and be married? The Archbishop of Canterbury read the service in a clear, sonorous voice, which appears to have created extreme surprise in the breasts of certain wise jackdaws, who perhaps expected that he must needs stammer and trip himself up in it. The remaining bishops and clergy "assisted" his Grace in the performance of the ceremony by standing behind him, and staring as hard as they could at the chief actors in the

pleasant scene. The organ boomed, and the choristers chanted in their proper places; only I would entreat you not to believe the dicta of certain very imaginative jackdaws, to the effect that the princess uttered the responses in a "low but silvery and perfectly audible voice." Of course both bride and bridegroom said what was set down for them, but not a syllable they said could be heard at our end of the edifice.

When the two were finally made one, there was a visible flutter of satisfaction all over the chapel. Stay! There was one exception. There was one personage who never moved, who never turned his eyes to the right nor to the left, from the moment when he stalked to his seat to the moment when, all being over, he stalked from it. The mass of kincob and jewels supposed to represent the Maharajah Dhuleep Singh made no sign. He bore it all like a wax-work image.

While the concluding Wedding March was thundering forth from the organ, the buried blower surpassing himself in efforts to raise the wind, we jackdaws dived down our staircase, pushed past a policeman—who, half by force and half by persuasion, endeavoured to induce us to remain where we were till the grandees had taken their departure—and deliberately fought our way out of the chapel. Not for us collations or gossiping comparison of notes. Our time for cawing in right business-like earnest had commenced. The gentlemen-at-arms crossed partisans to prevent our traversing the nave, so we dived between their gold-laced legs. The yeomen of the guard halloaed to us to stop; but we knew them to be ancient men, feeble in body and short in wind, and defied them. By a dexterous flank movement the police cut off our egress from the southern porch, whereupon we as dexterously doubled, skirted the northern aisle, and rushing through the Corps Diplomatique, reached a gate at the east, behind the altar, and fled into the open.

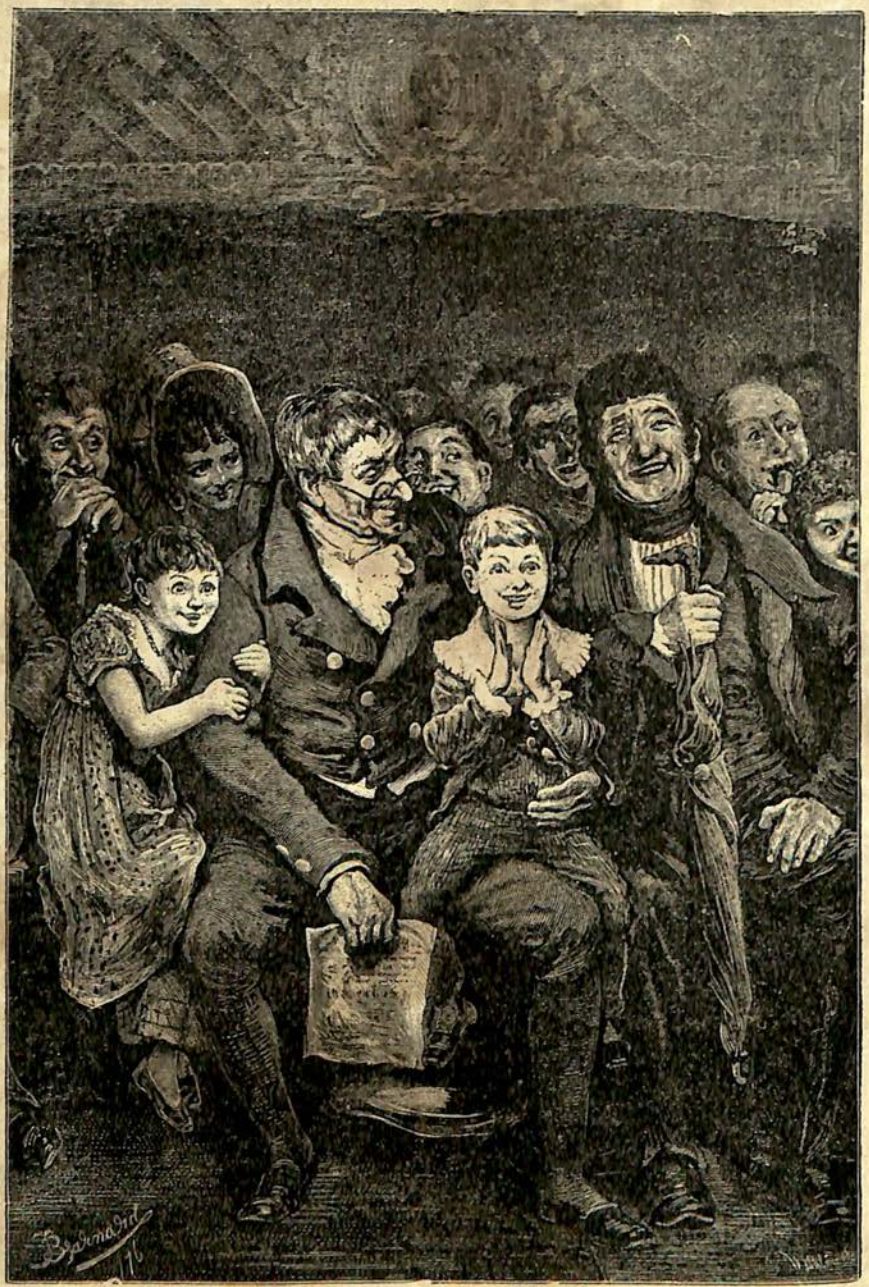
It was a fearful moment. The A division were in full cry after us. The Life Guards brandished their sabres fiercely, as we bolted beneath Henry the Eighth's gate. Here there was a chain and barriers, and the Berks constabulary seemed disposed

to show fight; taking us, perhaps, for members of the swell mob who had rifled the British Peerage of their diamonds, and were flying from justice. Fortunately, a shrewd metropolitan inspector recognised us as jackdaws. "Make way, there!" he cried. Away we fled, so fast that we might have been carrier pigeons. Away, away, down Thames Street, past the Castle and the White Hart; away, away, through hot masses of angry bumpkins; away, away, up a dusty turning to a terminus; away, away, wild and breathless, into a train which, with a screech and a yell, forthwith darted away as fast as it could pelt towards London.

With the assistance of a two-wheel cab, whose driver for double speed was pleased to be contented with triple fare, I reached, about three that afternoon, the jackdaws' haunt. And there, tying a wet towel round my head, and a wet pocket-handkerchief round each wrist, and taking off my coat, and kicking off my boots, I dipped my beak in ink and cried "caw" about the wedding till one in the morning. Then I went to bed.

I didn't feel quite so much like a jackdaw as I feel now, writing this paper. I felt like a preternaturally fagged-out and exhausted man. I looked with envy upon Vinny Bourne's bird, who could in secret survey the "bustle and the raree-show," secure and at his ease; and as I turned to my welcome rest, I might have muttered, had I not been too weary to do anything but gasp, the concluding stanza of the poem:

"Thrice happy bird! I too have seen
Much of the Vanities of men,
And, sick of having seen 'em,
Would cheerfully these limbs resign
For such a pair of wings as thine,
And such a head between 'em."



AT THE PLAY.

VIII.

Little Old Men.

ERROR and I may be twin brothers; but still I cannot help fancying that the age in which we live exhibits a sensible decline in the average number of Little Old Men, walking and talking in their appointed time and their allotted section of infinite space.

You, I, all the world must remember how plentiful little old men used, or, at least, seemed to be when we were young. Almost all of us must have had little old grandfathers, little old uncles, and especially little old godfathers, who were in the habit of presenting us with guineas on our birthday, or pot-bellied silver watches, and of treating us to the play at Covent Garden Theatre. "No play for you to-night;" that *was* a dire threat indeed in the golden age of the "Rejected Addresses," when we, perchance, imperilled our prospect of dramatic entertainment by thrusting our little sister's doll between the bars and melting off half her nose. It appears to me that the children of the present age, when they go to the play at all, take their parents and guardians instead of being taken; and as for little old godfathers and their birthday presents, it is in the first place patent that the sponsor, as a philanthropist, is all but extinct, that when you meet your godfather he usually crosses to the other side of the street to avert the possibility of being compelled to ask you to dinner, and that the only notice your godmamma ever takes of you is to beg autographs and *cartes de visite*, or to solicit your "well-known extensive influence" in procuring a nice little Indian appointment, or something of that kind, for her son Ulric, aged twenty-seven and a born fool.

Presents! When you are grown up they want gifts from you;

when you are small, and they must perforce give you something, it is generally something cheap from the Lowther Arcade, or else a two-shilling book bound in pink calico with Dutch metal binding, setting forth how happy Frank and Willy and Herbert were at Concord House or Euphism Academy, with an Alexandre harmonium to perform upon, and a vivarium to amuse them out of school, under the benevolent auspices of Dr. Wise, the schoolmaster, and Mr. Loveboy, his assistant (who eventually goes into the Church, and becomes the Bishop of Bungaree, Central Africa). Nothing is ever said about Dr. Muff, or Mr. Canechild, or Professor Screwboy, or Mr. Swindleparent, B.A. These books are generally written by schoolmasters for the purpose of puffing (often in the most undisguised manner) middle-class schools. There were books about schools and schoolboys, too, in the little old godfather days, but they were lifelike and true. Dr. Prosody was a kind pedagogue, and patted Harry on his flaxen head when he gave his pocket-money to the blind fiddler, or behaved so nobly in not betraying his playfellows in that matter of the rifled orchard; but what a tremendous flogging he administered to the traitor Philip, who should have confessed his share in the apple robbery, but allowed Harry to be brought within an inch of the horse for his (Philip's) misdeeds.

I say that godfathers and godmothers have degenerated into mere simulacra. They accept an awful responsibility with as much alacrity—and, as a rule, with as much sincerity—as the gentlemen who were wont to pervade Westminster Hall with straws in their shoes, and were ready to go bail for anybody, and to any extent, for half-a-crown. When we were young our sponsors made much of us, and left us fat legacies. I was blessed with one—a very little old gentleman who used to come from Finchley to Paddington once a month for the express purpose of teaching me my catechism. What has become of the conscientious people who used to renounce Satan and all his works, and the pomps and vanities of this wicked world for you?

I walk down Chancery Lane, and dive into the mouldy yards of the Inns of Court; I peep up staircases fretting with the dry rot;

I lift the musty curtains at the portals of the Great Hall of Pleas, and wander from the Queen's Bench to the Exchequer, from the Common Pleas to the Lords Justices; but I can discern no sign of the little old lawyer once so familiar to me. What has become of him? Was he esteemed an intrinsic part and parcel of *mesne process*, and so swept away by my Lord Brougham? Did he fade away and die of grief when the Petty Bag, the Pipe, the Pells, and the Palace Court were abolished? By the little old lawyer, of course I mean the practitioner who is either attorney or solicitor. The barrister is, and has always been, in nine cases out of ten, a big man, addicted to profuse whiskerage. Now and then you see a little counsel at the Chancery bar; but you can discern at a glance that he is not strong enough for Common Law, and that at the Old Bailey the jury—who like quantity, not quality, in counsel—would make light of him. He is only fit to descant, in a thin piping voice, on the infringement of a patent right in the matter of a fish-tail burner, and to quote precedents out of books well-nigh as big as himself. There is a play by Massinger, called the "Little French Lawyer;" and the hero, who is almost a dwarf, is an advocate; but then you must remember his nationality, and that in his days the line of demarcation between barristers and attorneys was not very strongly drawn. His name, La Writ, shows this.

The little old lawyer *I* knew was never at the bar. He lived in Lincoln's Inn Fields, or dwelt over his offices in Bedford-row. He wore hair-powder, a large bunch of seals at his fob, and was frequently given to knee-shorts. He delighted in a neatly-plaited shirt-frill, and a petrified-looking brooch, that might have been a fossil oyster, secured in some bygone lawsuit (plaintiff and defendant got the shells) or the desiccated heart of a client. His blue bag was of immense size. He knew what old port wine was, and kept plenty of it in the cellars under the clerks' office; nay, frequently, some was to be found of the right sort, with a bag of biscuits, in one of the tin office boxes, labelled "B. & Co." He never discounted bills, but lent money in the good old-fashioned way, on bond. He thought the Lord Chancellor the greatest of

living beings, and ranked next to him, perhaps, his lordship's train-bearer.

Sometimes he was a country lawyer, and then you may be sure that he lived in that comfortable red-brick house—the best, next to the rectory, in the village—with the flaming brass plate, like a brazen capias, on the door. He wore drab cords then, and gaiters, and was generally admired as a hard rider 'cross country. When he came to town, he stopped at the Gray's Inn Coffee-house; and was fond of seeing "The Gamester," at Drury Lane. The little old lawyer, in town as well as country, has almost disappeared. If your fancy, however, leads you to the cultivation of funerals, like poor crazy Lord Portsmouth, who was so fond of "black jobs," you may sometimes see the little old lawyer's frosted poll peering from the windows of a mourning coach, when a great lord or a rich dowager is going to the grave. Perhaps in one out of a hundred lawsuits, which chances to be conducted with something like honour and gentlemanly feeling on either side, you may find the little old lawyer concerned for one or the other party. But he is growing very rare. In vain may you sweep the attorneys' table in the law courts, in the hope of lighting on his trim sable figure, his powdered head, his gold-rimmed spectacles, his shrewd spirit looking, through his clean withered face and many-puckered wrinkles, "with eyes of hopeful intelligence, almost of benevolence."

In his stead what do you behold? Big fat lawyers with hoarse voices, who evidently sit in no awe of the judge, and patronise counsel in the most overbearing manner. Flash attorneys, who drive dog-carts, and bet—positively bet. Worse than all of these, the dandy young attorneys, with hair parted down the middle, pioneers' beards, eye-glasses, turn-down collars, guard-chains with lockets and trinkets attached, peg-top trousers, and shiny boots. Woe for the day when the Avvocati del Diavolo, when the protégés of St. Nicholas, take to varnishing their boots and scenting their pocket-handkerchiefs! I have seen some of these degenerate youths—not articled clerks, mind, but full-blown attorneys—walking down to Westminster with a bundle of papers in one hand, and a cigar in the other. The melancholy change that has

come over a once solemn and demure profession, cannot be better summed up than in remarking that nothing is more common now than to see lawyers at the Opera and in the ranks of the Volunteers.

When I had chambers in Deadman's Inn, there was a real little old lawyer, who had his offices at Number Nine. He arrived every morning punctually at ten, in a yellow fly—not a brougham, be it understood—from Balham, the locality of his country house. It was my great delight to watch for his arrival, and see him alight from the yellow fly. It was all there: hair powder, watch-fob and seals, knee-shorts—no, as I live, pantaloons and hessians! big blue bag, shirt frill, petrified brooch, large diamond ring on his forefinger (presented to him A.D. 1818, in the condemned cell, Newgate, by Mr. Montmorency Fluke, the celebrated forger, for whom he was concerned), and beaver hat, turned up just at the slightest angle of flection at the brim.

"This is a man," I used to say, with great respect, to myself, "who can remember forty-shilling arrests, thirty years' long Chancery suits, and Monday hanging mornings, with a dozen victims; the Fleet and the Rules of the Bench, the seventy Commissioners in Bankruptcy, and the Court of Pie Powder; John Doe and Richard Roe, John a'Nokes and John a'Styles, sticks and staves, and justification of sham bail—he has been familiar with all these mysteries now gone into irrevocable limbo." And as I looked upon the little old lawyer I sighed; for, alas! he was very, very old, and came down to the office more by habit and for peaceful recreation than anything else. The suing and selling-up is now done by his sons and partners, one of whom is six feet high and as hirsute as was Julia Pastrana,* while the other is poetical and plays the flute. I have chambers in Drybones' Inn now, and have not as yet found one little old lawyer.

There was much that was good about another little old man—the schoolmaster. It is true that, as an educational means, he thought a birch the very best thing in the world, and next to that a cane, and next to that a strap; but he was not without some

* A bearded woman from South America exhibited in London in 1857.

capacity for teaching, and some faculty for understanding his boys; he struck, but he heard. Some modern preceptors are so much in the habit of talking about themselves, that it is with difficulty the scholar gets a word in. There is a charming figure of the little old schoolmaster, in as charming a picture by Mr. Mulready, in the Sheepshanks' Collection—a spare, pale, thoughtful pedagogue, severe you may be sure, but just, and willing to hear both sides. He has made his appearance at the close of a fiercely contested bout at fisticuffs, and is solemnly tweaking the boy, who has been denounced by his schoolfellows as bully and aggressor in the fray, by the ear. That boy's defence, if he can make any, will be listened to; but I will wager that ere the sun goes down—and it is declining—he will be led off to the little old schoolmaster's study and scourged. Now and then, in remote country places, you may still come upon the little old schoolmaster, in rusty black, and sometimes with a red nose, who officiates as parish clerk, sings a capital comic song, has written a satire upon the squire, and indites love-letters for the village maidens. But he is rapidly ceding to the influence of the trained schoolmaster, with all kinds of uncomfortable certificates, and the bloom of Privy Council patronage upon him.

And the little old doctor. Ah! there is corn in Egypt. All is not barren. The diminutive veteran of medical science still flourishes. I am myself one of the most prejudiced of mankind, and I confess that I don't like my doctors when young, or large. If the former, I ask querulously what they know about my stomach? They are not old enough to have a stomach of their own. If the latter—if they run large, and are muscular and good-looking—I fancy they are too much occupied in boating, or cricketing, or spouting, or riding, or flirting, to devote the proper quota of time to study and experiment. I have known many doctors who were expert photographers. In my captious way, I always contended they would have been much better employed in dissecting frogs. We want a doctor to know all about the inside of things, not their exterior. May he not take a turn at his camera during his leisure time? it may be asked. A doctor

has no right to any leisure. When fatigued with study, let him seek out a brother medico and amicably converse upon the arrangement of nuclei, or the different processes of the central lamella of the ethmoid bone. Let him descant on frigorific mixtures or compound mercurial liniments. Had John Hunter any leisure? Had Astley Cooper, had Abernethy, had Bichât, had Esquirol? Look at that wonderful Monsieur Majendie, who, in his odd moments, vivisected cats, dogs, and rabbits—*pour se distraire!*

Again, large doctors make a noise in the sick-room, handle you roughly, and talk loud. Give me a little old man for a physician. I don't care if he be old enough to have killed my grandmother. I say, when I am sick, "This withered bright-eyed little old Sage has brought hundreds of children into the world, has seen hundreds of strong men die, has saved hundreds of others who were in worse case than I. Let him work his will with me. He is not a fool. He must have seen much, learnt much, and must know more." In matters of surgery I admit that I don't stand out for age and size. When amputation be unavoidable, the Colossus of Rhodes may as well cut off your leg as a pigmy.

So great a change has come—emphatically over the *face* of English society since the momentous question "Why shave?" was mooted some twelve years since in *Household Words*,* that very nearly all the ancient landmarks and types of outward character are as lost as the books of Livy. When I state that the porter of the Strand Union workhouse in London wears a luxuriant beard, that pawnbrokers, railway guards, and linen-drapers' assistants have burst out in moustaches, and that my bootmaker called upon me the other morning with a "goatee," the extent to which abundant hairiness has changed the aspect of polite society will be readily understood. Orson is everywhere, Valentine nowhere. Love levels ranks; but beards give to modern English humanity as uniform a facial cast as may be seen in that famous regiment of the Russian guards, twelve hundred strong,

* In 1853.

all the privates of which have snub noses, and the field-officers alone are permitted to be nasally Roman.

The little old gentlemen one meets in easy life, have, as a rule, abandoned themselves to the beard mania, and to me are little old gentlemen no more. When I see grizzled beards wagging beneath their little noses and spectacles, my thoughts revert with anything but favourable impressions to the gardens of the Zoological Society, and the inmates of certain cages I have seen there. Upon my word I saw a little old Reverend, Fellow of his College, too, with a beard, but three weeks since. No wonder that "Essays and Reviews" run through so many editions, and that heterodoxy is rife in the land!

By little old men I do not mean dwarfs. There is the usual number of those afflicted persons to be seen about; and an elderly dwarf is the usual merry sprightly musical little fellow, or else the (nearly as usual) spiteful, malevolent, snapping and snarling little nuisance. No, no; the little old men I seek and so rarely find, are the dapper, symmetrical, clean-limbed personages who, for grinning and bowing, for smirking and simpering, for fetching ladies' cloaks and putting on their own goloshes, for slapping giants on the back, even if they stand on tiptoe to do it, for poking people in the ribs, and seeing the hardest drinkers out at a carouse, were inimitable and unequalled. They were almost always valiant little men, too, choleric, peppery, tremendous fire-eaters, often lugging about huge cases of duelling pistols. How they snapped off the noses of tavern waiters! How they put their arms a-kimbo and beat hackney-coachmen off their own ground, by slanging them down! In argument it was difficult to find a match for the little old men. It was no use taunting them with the "infirmities of age," or calling calling them dotards and fogies. They weren't infirm; they didn't dote; they hadn't a touch of fogeyism about them.

But where does one find the active, jaunty, sarcastic little old man now-a-days? Large, limp, purse-mouthed old men fill the bow-windows of clubs, wheezing forth platitudes to other old men. Sad old boys maunder in drawing rooms or grumble at dinner-

tables. Dreary old peers, six feet bent double, rise from the back benches of their Lordships' House, and deny the fact of the sun having risen that morning. It would be libellous, perhaps, to hint that—well, our vestries—are governed by knots of doddering old men; but it is undeniable, I think, that many really clever little old men were formerly to be found in the Commons House of Parliament. Those that now remain are few, and are growing a feeble folk.

Little old men seemed to have acquired their vivacity, as old port wine its crust and flavour, by long keeping and careful cellarage. There is, as a rule, nothing more remarkable in a little young man than his conceit. As for little middle-aged men, they frequently keep their diminutive size a secret altogether. It is astonishing how many middle-aged men are not more than four foot nothing, and the world, even to the wives of their bosoms, are not in the least aware of the fact. Louis le Grand masqueraded it through life on high-heeled shoes and in a towering periwig; and it was only when he died that the undertaker first, and Europe afterwards, discovered that he was a little man. Voltaire, again, was not half so tall as he gave himself out, and the world supposed him to be. It is better, perhaps, that these things should be kept secrets of state, even from ourselves. It is not good to find out too much about great men—about men altogether, it may be. Are we anything the better for the information imparted to us, with a diabolic sneer, by Swift, that "man is only a forked straddling animal with bandy legs?"

It is curious to contrast the images handed down to us of the illustrious dead who were of no great stature with what might have been their semblance had they become old. Alexander the Great, for all Apelles' flattery, was a little man. Imagine the conqueror of Darius as both little and old! Or, more suggestive still, picture to yourself Napoleon the First, had he survived Sir Hudson Lowe—who, by the way, did live to be old, and was of no great stature—as a little old man—brisk, alert, snuffy, and with a scratch-wig! Not that little old kings and emperors have been, or are, rarities. Sovereigns, as a rule, run small. No doubt con-

tinual preoccupation in devising beneficial measures for their subjects dries them up. They are so good that they lose flesh. The weight of a crown contracts their joints. The odour of incense—like the gin given to the poor little children of acrobats—stops their growth. Turn over the *Almanach de Gotha*, and interleave it with *cartes de visite*, and you will find the majority of European sovereigns to be below the average size. King Oscar of Sweden is a phenomenon to rank in a museum by the side of the Emperor of Russia's colossal drum-major and O'Brien, the Irish Giant. Besides, was not his Swedish majesty's grandfather Bernadotte, the grenadier?

The mention of continental potentates reminds me that France is to this day the country of little old men. Still at the Café de Foy and other good old pigtail establishments, where smoking is not permitted and the poisonous absinthe emits no vapid odour—still in Luxembourg and Tuileries Gardens, in salons of the Faubourg St. Germain, in *cabinets de lecture* hard by the Odéon—do you meet the little old Frenchman with his cheerful dried chimpanzee face, his thatch of white stubble, his snowy neckerchief, the red ribbon at his button-hole, and the never-failing snuff-box in his hand, ready to be offered to all acquaintances. In his youth he was a *Merveilleux*, a *Muscadin*, an *Incroyable*. He remembers the first Empire, the two Restorations, the Hundred Days. He was a page to the Reine Hortense, perhaps; an officer in Charles the Tenth's Royal Guards, probably. He ceased to trouble himself with politics after the 27th of July, 1830. At the monarchies, republics, and empires which have succeeded that convulsion he shrugs his little shoulders with philosophic indifference. "*C'est comme ça*," he says. He speaks of all the kings, dictators, marshals, ministers, since 1830, as "*ces Messieurs!*" Let us lift the hat to this little old Frenchman, with his weazen countenance and his thin legs, his agile, courteous ways. He, too, is fading out.

A little old Frenchman of the stock once gravely accounted to me for the undeniable ugliness and boorishness of the modern Parisian, by asserting that he was the unconscious offspring of

the Cossacks who formed part of the army of occupation in 1815. It is a wise child that knows his own father. Be it as it may, it is indubitable that the graceful and polite little old Frenchman —perfectly well known in English society forty years ago as the emigrant chevalier who taught dancing and the languages in ladies' boarding schools, who was as gallant as Dunois, and as chivalrous as Bayard, and lived contentedly on twopence-halfpenny a day—is on the wane.

Your little old men abroad live, when they are to be found extant at all, to a prodigious age. They seem to be subject to the same mummifying influences as the bodies of the old monks in Sicily. They grow very yellow, very withered, their bones seem to crack as they walk, but they don't die. Take my friend Estremadura, for instance. I have known Senor Ramon de Estremadura ever since I can remember the knowledge of anything. That hidalgo knew my papa, and *he* has been dead five-and-thirty years. Estremadura was so old when I was a child that the nurses used to frighten me with him. I have met him off and on, in almost every capital in Europe. Only this summer, drinking tea with certain friends, there came a brisk though tremulous little double knock at the door. "*Ecoutez*," cried the lady of the house; "that surely is Estremadura's knock." Estremadura! There was a cry of derisive amazement. Everybody agreed that he had been dead ten years. Somebody had seen an account of his funeral in the newspapers. But the door opened, and Estremadura made his appearance.

He was the same as ever. The same yellow face, black bead-like eyes, innumerable wrinkles, fixed grin: the same straw hat, grass-green coat, white trousers, and big stick—his unvarying costume ever since I had known him. "How you do?" was his salutation to me; "Ver well since I saw you lasse?" I had not seen him for fifteen years. He chatted and talked and drank tea. He was asked whence he had come? From Rome. Whither he was going? To Stockholm. He was charming; yet we could not help feeling, all of us, as though we were sitting in the presence of a facetious phantom, of a jocular ghost. It was

rather a relief when he skipped away, and was seen no more. I wonder whether he will ever turn up again. It is clear that Estremadura is ninety, if he be a day old; yet I dare say he will read the account of *my* death, if anybody takes the trouble to advertise that fact in the newspapers, and say, "Aha! and so he die. Eh! I knew his good papa ver well."

Surely we should be careful in keeping up the breed of little old men at home as well as abroad. To me they are infinitely more agreeable than big men, young or old. But they are dwindling away, they are vanishing fast. The little old ticket-porters, with their white aprons, are being superseded by burly middle-aged messengers, or else by bearded commissionaires. Artists get into the Academy before they are forty; and the little old painter who remembers Northcote, and to whom the Princess Amelia sat for her portrait, is a *rara avis*. Among the City companies you sometimes light upon wardens and members of the court of assistants, who are little old men of the true stamp. But their numbers are waxing small, and it must be written of them, "Here lie."

I own there is one class of little old men whom I could well spare from the stage of existence. I mean the half-palsied, shrivelled, wo-begone little grey atomies in blue smocks and corduroy shorts, and ribbed stockings on their shrunken shanks, whom the metropolitan boards of guardians send out to sweep the streets. They are always in imminent danger of being run over. They always sweep the refuse the wrong way. It is terrible to look at their poor old faces and bleary eyes, full of drowsy woe, blank misery, inane despair. "No hope, and there never has been any these seventy years;" these words seem legibly inscribed on the bands round their oilskin hats. These little old men are a fear and a wonder to me, and in decency and mercy I think they should not be allowed to drift about in the great river of London street life.

IX

The Paper on the Wall.

THERE is a character common enough in plays, in novels, in the imaginations of young ladies, but very seldom to be found, I apprehend, in real life, called the "gay young bachelor." This blithesome rover is generally understood to be one of the happiest of mortals. He has no wife, no children, no cares of rent, taxes, water-rate, doctors' bills, milliners' "little accounts," monthly nurses, or Irish maid servants. He knows not the agony of ordering dinner. It is there, waiting for him, at five hundred gay, jolly eating-houses, and all he has to do is to eat it—and pay for it—but in a gay, rollicking, roving style. Quarter-day concerns him not, except haply he has four times a-year to receive the instalments of his gay young independence. He lives in chambers: he stops out to all sorts of hours, for has he not a latch-key proper in his scutcheon, with the motto, "Who's afraid?" He asks as many and whomsoever he pleases to see him; he entertains them with hot drinks *ad libitum;* he smokes like a limekiln or a beefsteak pudding; he belongs to clubs of a convulsively convivial nature; he may go to the Opera, the theatres, the Cider Cellars, Evans's, even to the delirious and Eleusinian Argyll, and no man can gainsay him; for is he not a gay young bachelor?

He lives in a vortex of evening parties, broiled bones, Epsom Spring Meetings, scolloped oysters, unlimited trousers, with stripes down the sides, Greenwich fish dinners, Rose Cottage *parties fines*, claret cups, best Havannahs, bottled pale ale, devilled kidneys, white kid gloves, and three-cornered pink notes scented with *bouquet de l'Impératrice*. His house is his castle; when his hat

is on, that house is covered; he is as merry as a cricket, as jovial as that uproarious Grindoff whose mill was on the river Dee; nay, he is even jollier than he, for though he cares for nobody, a great many people care for him. Mammas with turbans and false fronts care for him; young ladies with long ringlets and parti-colour-leaved albums care for him; managers of theatres where there is half-price set great store by him; sailors adore him; tavern waiters cherish him; lodging-house landlords pet him; hansom-cabmen swear by him; royal academicians paint pictures for him, and say (may the soulless, tasteless shadows of those R.A.s ever be less) "Sherry, sir!" Five hundred ladies of the ballet shake their ten hundred legs in his honour. A merry life, a mad life: melancholy married men envy him, to be sure; but it is something to be envied. So let us have t'other bottle, and light another cigar, Larkins, my boy; and let us all be gay young bachelors while we can. All. Ha! ha!—Humph!

I have not the slightest wish to argue away any existing credence, be it based on truth or falsehood. We believe far too little as it is, for me to rob belief of one syllable of its confession. I am not here to destroy—I cannot rebuild—I am incompetent—I am afraid—I am indifferent—go, clear the world of lies, you other strong-minded philosophers, and then bring me one grain of truth, if you can, and you shall be better rewarded than though you had found the philosopher's stone. So I will essay no reasons here as to whether the gay young bachelor belief may, after all, be but a superstition—whether that gay youth may be but a myth, an eidolon of some unrealisable felicity—a standard that is never attained—a sort of Apollo Belvedere, in a long coat and an all-round collar, which a sculptor can imagine and even hew out in marble, and set up on a pedestal, but which can never become flesh and blood, can never promenade Regent Street, nor take the odds on the favourite for the Derby. I would as soon see the gaiety of the bachelor theory demolished as champagne banished from wedding breakfasts; or the dear old ridiculous fairy tales of our youth—Tom Thumb, Jack and the Beanstalk, and the rest of the harmless, lying host—superseded by Mr. George

Cruikshank's filtered versions of fairy lore, or by the "Child's Book of the Soul," or "Little Harry's Pneumatics in Play," or the "Young Geologist."

If I had no other reason for tolerating bachelorhood, as it is imagined (and I have a hundred), it would be for this, that it encourages and elates, and occupies that other delightful section of humanity—the gay young spinsters. Do not the thoughts of gay young bachelors incite the dear creatures we love so well to adorn and beautify themselves, to throw out lures, and springes, and man-traps, and spring-guns, all for the special behoof of youthful bachelors; them to hook and catch, and triumphantly conduct, bound in chains of roses and orange-flowers, to the altar poetically named of Hymen; there to catch the rheumatism by standing on the cold stones, and to put a ring on somebody else's finger they might just as well keep on their own, and to say "yes," when they should say "no," and "I will," when "I'm hanged if I do" would be quite as sensible, if not so decorous; and so for poorer and poorer, and for worse and worse, to renounce their youth, and their gaiety, and their bachelorhood once and for ever.

Gay young bachelors, indeed—but Truth, avaunt! Let me not even whisper how many of them may be grey-headed old reprobates, how many disappointed, broken, worn-out men, pining for a condition they seek to disparage, sneering at a felicity they envy. Spinsterhood, I take it, is a condition—plain, palpable, open. Every woman would marry if she could, and does marry when she can; and there is no woman so hideous—not a monster—but can find suitors; 'tis but, we know, the miserable state of that great lie of life, with all its rotten conventionalities, which we miscall Society, that causes the existence of old maids at all. But who can fathom the mysteries of bachelorhood? Who shall tell its unutterable secrets? Can I? How many are there who pass for gay young bachelors, and are neither young, nor gay, nor bachelors! How many doubts and fears, loves, hopes, despairs, heart-skeletons, keep men celibate. This is a monk in a cell, who should have had ten children: that a roysterer, clattering about the world, alone, like a courier; yet to whom quiet at ten and

bed at eleven, carpet slippers, a kind woman's face, and little children to lisp "Our Father" at his knee, would be the *summum bonum* of felicity.

It is ill to pry into these things. Let us take the good, and lock the evil up in an iron chest, taking good care against inquisitive Wilfreds. So long live the gay young bachelor! For him are ladies' round hats and polka jackets; for him the Redowa and the *deux temps;* for him Pyrrha binds her golden hair; for him vocal inquiries, as to whether he will love then as now; for him the Marriage Act, and the wedding-rings in the pawnbrokers' windows. Beatrix will relent some of these days, perhaps, and he will turn out a highly respectable Benedict, and be very happy and domestic, and have the brokers in for those last two quarters' rent.

All of which speculations grew out of the "paper on the wall," and I will tell you how. Will you suppose yourself to be a man of slightly lugubrious temperament, say the melancholy Jaques, and that you have met with, not a fool in a forest, but a good swingeing fit of illness—brain fever, ague, small-pox, what you will—that has laid you on your back as scientifically as though you had been floored by Mr. James Ward,* that has, to carry out the simile (I hope with pardonable vulgarity), drawn your claret, damaged your peepers, grassed you, and made you exceedingly "groggy," and loose on the "pins." The ex-champion—I beg pardon, the doctor—has had it all his own way with you—you have hit out widely and gone down at the ropes, and "time" has been called, till your physic-bottle holder has thrown up the sponge: time has been called, but you never heeded it; the hours and the days have passed, now dragging slowly, painfully, now galloping with frenzied rapidity, but you have never counted them.

The evening and the morning have been as one. Was it yesterday or a week since that you tossed your arms about and raved; that you felt as though you could pour the Mississippi's waters down your throat, and that a mocking nurse seemed to stand by with a goblet, of whose contents she refused to give you

* A noted pugilist of the time.

one single drop; that the room went round and round; that five hundred devils were hammering away at your head with red-hot hammers; that one stronger devil than all, inside your head, pushed perpetually at your eyeballs, as though to drive them from their sockets, like bullets; that the doctor came to feel your pulse, and grew immediately to be fourteen feet high; that the bed-clothes encircled you with a clammy embrace like serpents, and would not be cast off, but bound you in strange bonds, so that you could not raise your hands to keep off the bats and owls that flew down from the *paper on the wall* to rend your face? Has it been since this morning, or a hundred years, that you have lain staring at that awful paper, twisting its pattern into strange shapes, dreading yet loving it, ever endeavouring to turn your head away from those mural terrors, but ever returning to them, with a strange fascination, following its windings, giving it life, movement, endless varieties of form and expression, clinging to it, loathing it, looking at it always?

You are better now. You have had a bad time of it, but *Pallida Mors* is not to have it his own way this time at least. In your frenzy there was a ridiculous black man with a banjo and a preposterous fluffy white hat, who came right out of the wall, and cried continually, "Jaques, you must die. In five minutes you must die. In two minutes, in one, you must die! Now! No more speculations on forests; no more dissertations on wounded deer; no more didactic musings on the seven ages; no more moralising on other men's skulls—Yorick is waiting to preach a sermon on yours, as Hamlet will some day on his—no more stoups of liquor, nothing but a mattock and a spade; the grave-digger has taken off his seven waistcoats, the worms are waiting. You are to DIE!—not to-morrow, or in ten years, but now, irrevocably now!" Why did the black man's face, as he said this, change into that of the doctor, of your father whom you never saw, of your sister who has been dead ten years? why on his accursed banjo does he play now the overture to a pantomime, now some old old strain of music that you used to love so when a little child, and that somebody used to sing so sweetly? But you

never broke that porcelain cup for which you were beaten. No! a thousand times, No! on the word of a dying man, No! After a lapse of twenty years, No! You never broke it, and yet they beat you, and it was a shame! a shame! and you burst out into tears and sobbing. It was then that the nurse shook her head (though you never noticed it) and whispered to the doctor—*Que vous battiez la campagne.* Why should you have thought of that long-forgotten porcelain cup, and felt once more, in all its rigour, the injustice you had suffered, and that you had often mourned, a child, about?

But you are not to die this time; yet you shudder, now, to think how near death you have been. You are in a strange land, far away from home and friends and all you love. As you lie weak and prostrate, gazing upwards on the paper, there look on you from the interstices of the design,—what? No longer griffins, no longer bats and owls, no longer twisting serpents as in the old days of the frenzy,—but faces;—kind, melancholy, sadly reproachful. The eyes are eloquent, and say not angrily, but meekly, tenderly, "Why have you stayed so long? What have we done? Return! Think that you might have died." You might have died, indeed. You might have been thrust into a deal box, and been carted off to the *fosse commune.* Who would not have died at Balaclava! but who would die here, on this pallet-bed among strangers, with strangers to close the eyes and bind up the jaw? Field-Marshal Death, in a cocked hat and epaulettes—Death amid trumpets, and cannon, and war-horses, and waving banners, loses half his terrors; but

"N'a-t-elle pas une autre mine,
Quand, pas-à-pas, elle s'achemine
Vers un malade qui languit;
Ne semble-t-elle pas bien laide
Quand elle vient muette et raide
Prendre un homme dedans son lit?"

I am a nervous man; and I confess that few things terrify me more than the idea of dying, alone, in Paris. It is terrible. The hurried burial; the maimed rites; the seeming callousness of the people to the awful change, and their indecent impatience to get

rid of the ugly thing that was yesterday their master, their wife, their child, and return to their dicing, drinking and dancing—these things make me a coward. Listen. I remember once an unfortunate man—he was a Pole—who committed suicide in the same Paris hotel in which I was staying, and in the very next room to me. They put him into the usual unpainted box (he being quite destitute) and carried him away to the usual pauper's ditch. As they bore him through the court-yard, there were standing under the *porte cochère* (the day was drizzlingly wet) two young grisettes, comely, fresh-looking, bedizened in all the approved finery of the grisette toilette. And as the sorry coffin of the pauper Pole passed by, I heard one girl say to the other, "*Quelle puanteur!*" This was all. Off went the grisettes to the *fête* or the *magasin*, and off went the Pole to the cemetery of Montmartre. "*Quelle puanteur!*" And yet it was as much to the purpose as Ben Jonson's epitaph upon the Countess of Pembroke.

But you are to think of death no more, melancholy Jaques, for you are getting much better. The doctor says so. You begin to despise apple tea, to look coldly upon bouillon and dry toast, and to crave for chicken. The *concierge*—who inquired casually of the waiter during your illness (though you never heard her), "Si le numéro vingt-six était mort!" ("*crêvé*," I think, was the exact term)—sends to felicitate you on your recovery. The landlord is immensely pleased, not to say relieved, by your convalescence. He does not like dead lodgers and had even hinted once or twice (with extreme delicacy, of course), when you were *in extremis*, at the propriety of your removal to the hospital. But a fig for the *concierge*, the waiter, and the landlord to boot. You grow stronger every day. You grow bold enough to laugh at the paper on the wall, and to wonder how the brightly-tinted flowers with which it is covered could ever have frightened you. One more change, indeed, it undergoes; but lo! it is to a fantastic arabesque of anchors, lovingly interlaced. And you feel new life, and strength, and hope, and are the melancholy Jaques no more.

Now, reader of mine, can you guess what gay young bachelors

can have to do with the paper-stainer's art? I must make a clean breast of it, if you are yet unenlightened. The secret must out. I have been fencing with it for half a dozen pages. The "Paper on the Wall" is intended as a strenuous counsel to all young bachelors, falsely called gay, to get married as fast as ever they can. The learned somebody says profoundly, but ungallantly, that the woman who is alone—*male cogitat*. Don't believe him. 'Tis the man who is alone who thinks badly, acts badly. If you, melancholy, almost moribund Jaques, instead of being a miserable young bachelor, had had some gentle Mrs. Jaques to nurse and tend you, the paper on the wall—I don't say that you would have entirely escaped its influence—would have lost half its horrors. Kind hands would have drawn a curtain across it, kind hands would have smoothed your pillow, kind eyes would have been bent upon you,—a better mirror, I fancy, to gaze upon than the hideous wall paper. Heaven keep me—you, Jaques, I mean—from it again!

X.

Flowers of the Witness Box.

"THE evidence you shall give, shall be the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth, so help you ——;" and with the customary adjuration, which, on my ears, always grates with disagreeable harshness from the thoroughly methodical and indifferent sing-song in which the words are pronounced, A. B. is sworn and proceeds to give evidence. I dare say that he often deposes to more than the truth, and I am afraid as often to less than the truth; but I doubt the frequency of his coming up to the exact exigent standard demanded by his oath. Granting him honest, he may be nervous and irritable, with a confused memory for dates, and an inconvenient knack for remembering only those events or portions of conversation which the gentleman in the wig who is teasing him with questions most devoutly wishes were dismissed from his mind.

But consider the witness sworn. Why, if he be a man, does a fatuous greasy smile generally play about his lips as he mumbles at the ragged dog's-eared book which the usher, with an utter disregard for the fitness of things, has provided from the nearest second-hand book-stall among other "properties" of a court of law? Why, when he is duly sworn, does he ordinarily pass the back of his hand over his lips as though to wipe away the taste of the oath he has just taken? Why, from the beginning to the end of his ordeal in the witness-box, is his hat the bane and burden of his existence? Why is the smoothing of its nap—when it has any—a task which he incessantly pursues? Why is its brim an object to be perpetually plucked and pinched with

dumpy fingers? Why, if the witness be a lady, does she, in lieu of mumbling or kissing the book, give it a defiant smack that is half a bite—as though it were a Man, and she meant to stand no nonsense from it? Why does the lady-witness commence proceedings by retying her bonnet-strings, or her boa? Why in the thumb of her left hand glove is there almost invariably an orifice, disclosing flesh? Why does the dandy-deponent, the witness of the upper Ten Thousand, when he leaves the box, contrive to stumble over two out of the three steps that lie between him and the floor of the court?

Why? Well; because the majority of witnesses are nervous and irritable, you may answer. But you don't see that greasy fatuous smile anywhere out of a court of justice. The back-handed movement, the painful pantomime with the hat, the stumble over the stairs, the hole in the thumb of the left-hand glove, belong to witnesses exclusively; and witnesses themselves are, so runs my theory, a race and type of humanity, apart. Some babies are born with silver spoons, and others with wooden ladles, in their mouths. I believe in an order of children who are born with the ragged dog's-eared book at their lips, by whose cradle side the swearing usher stands, and who are brought up as witnesses from the breast.

I have come to be within pistol-shot of forty years of age, and I never was publicly examined in any case, civil or criminal, in my life. And yet I have lived, an't please you, in a continually simmering vat of hot water. Litigation! Why, I know all the offices in Parchmentopolis, as well as any lawyer's clerk in his second year, and have a whole tin box at home full of bills of costs and green ferret. If the number of processes which have been served upon me were all laid together longitudinally, they would reach—say, from Doctor's Commons to old Palace Yard. Lawsuits! I have been a party to scores of them. Plaints! Her Majesty's attorney-general has done me the honour to bring three several actions against me in the Court of Exchequer, and still I have never stood up in a witness-box, never kissed the book, twiddled my hat, and been told to look at the jury, to

listen to the judge, to pay particular attention to the examining counsel, not forgetting general injunctions to "speak up," and to be careful about what I said, on pain of being committed for contempt, or indicted for perjury.

I will admit that my legal testimony has more than once been called for. What I have known, or what other people chose to take it into their heads that I have known, about the rights and wrongs of certain quarrels, has, from time to time, made many most respectable plaintiffs and defendants anxious to "have me in the box," and to subject the discreetly corked bottle of truth within me, to the action, persuasive or coercive, of the forensic corkscrew. It has never come to anything. I have been subpœnaed over and over again. I have touched that mysterious guinea which the clerk, vegetating, perhaps, on a hopeless five-and-twenty shillings a week, hands to you with a grudging politeness—that guinea which neither looks, nor feels, nor sounds, like other money—and which, Vespasian's axiom nevertheless, *olet*, for it smells of pounced vellum and japanned tin—that guinea, which, somehow, never seems to have been fairly come by, or legitimately earned, but rather to be of the nature of the demon's arles, and which consequently you make all convenient haste to spend in some wild waste or unholy prodigality. I have a stuffed heron in a glass case at home; I bought it with a subpœnal guinea. I bought a chance in the Art Union with another. I divided a third between a share in the Frankfort lottery and a box of pills warranted to cure all diseases, and the consumption of which added about half a dozen to the ailments from which I was already suffering. It is, abstractedly, so monstrous and prodigious a thing that the law should pay you anything, that the primary fact of the donative begets recklessness and mistrust. You feel, either that you are taking the money of the widow and the orphan, or that you are the stipendiary of a rogue.

With numerous subpœnas, how is it that the usher has never called my name in court? If litigants have been so anxious to "have me in the box," how comes it that I have never appeared

in the box? Let fate and my destinal star reply. Time after time have I gone down to Westminster Hall, to Guildhall, nay, to Croydon or Guildford, when an astute and pennyless plaintiff, wishing simply to annoy a wealthy defendant, has laid the venue of a twenty-pound plaint in Surrey or elsewhere, as far away from the real scene of dispute as possible. Days have I wasted, and waited for the particular case I have been concerned in to come on; yet, like a boastful but craven pugilist, it never has come on—at least, it has never advanced to sufficient ripeness for my advent to become an advent. Either the jury have in an early stage of the case shown unmistakable signs that they had had enough of it, or the judge has suggested an arrangement, complimenting the parties on their high respectability—when the plaintiff was fully prepared to show that the defendant was twin-brother to Barabbas, and whereas the defendant was bent on calling *me* to prove that the habitual turpitude of the plaintiff exceeded, on the whole, that of Jonathan Wild, Sawney Bean, and Mother Brownrigg.

Likewise is it due in justice to the bar of England to confess that many of my cases in Westminster Hall have been settled without going into court, through the kind offices of the counsel employed on either side. Who would imagine that so much benevolence lurked beneath those spiky horsehair wigs; that beneath those austere stuff gowns such kindly hearts were beating? "Can't we come to a friendly understanding?" says Rubasore, Q.C., whom I always (quite erroneously, it seems) assumed to be a most quarrelsome fellow. "Come now, my good sir," puts in Serjeant Squallop, "is there no way of settling this unpleasant little difference?" How glibly they talk of the uncertainty of the law! How delicately they hint at the inconvenience of one's private affairs being sifted before a ribald audience, and exposed next day in the newspapers! How deftly they draw our attention to the fact that one story is a good one till another is told; that, strong as we may think our case, the other side may have a stronger; that, even if we gain a verdict, we may be beaten in the long run by a point of law and a new trial. "And you know

what casuists we lawyers are," simpers Rubasore, Q.C., with deprecatory shrug.

So the case is settled, and I get my guinea for nothing. Who shall accuse the bar, after this, of a disposition towards fomenting litigation and engendering strife? I wonder if ever I could be a peacemaker? Yes; I think I could, if I were a Q.C. in good practice, with my fee paid beforehand. I think I should be glad to patch up little differences without going into court if I wanted to get away early to a dinner at Richmond, or if my cob were waiting to take me for an airing, or if I had rather a heavy case coming on in the Queen's Bench in half an hour, which rendered this particular one in the Common Pleas somewhat of a bore.

I can't say that I am much the better for the gratuitous guineas I have had as compensation for the writ of subpœna; for the stuffed heron is getting rather shaky about the legs, and at the sale of my effects will fetch, I apprehend, something considerably under a crown. But my wanderings in legal purlieus have not been, perhaps, wholly barren. I have studied witnesses; I have marked their ways, made notes of their demeanour, envisaged their lineaments, and catalogued their apparel. I have grown at last—errors excepted, of course—to distinguish witnesses from other men.

You may tell your witness, first, from the fact that he is always hungry and thirsty, and that the voracity with which he partakes of refreshment is only equalled by his cheerful alacrity to be fed. For the witness is a creature to be paid and not to pay. Nothing edible or potable comes amiss to him. He is ready for a mutton chop at ten thirty; for a quiet crust of bread and cheese and a glass of old ale—he is very fond of old ale—at noon; for a substantial "point" steak, a mealy potato like a ball of flower, a pickled walnut, and a pint of Allsopp's draught, at one p.m.; for any number of sandwiches and glasses of sherry while the managing clerk holds him in whispered confabulation as to that one point about which he is to be so very particular in giving his evidence, and which he either totally forgets or makes some transcendental blunder about before he has been five minutes

in the box. Then, again, he is ready, when the case is over, for a regular good dinner, washed down by champagne and port—the last a peculiar rich brown fruity vintage, like liquid plum-pudding with plenty of brandy in it: the special growth of the vineyards patronised by legal hotel-keepers, and which has the curious property of causing every witness, after the second glass, to inform his neighbour in a confidential hiccup that if it hadn't been for the manner in which he gave his evidence, the case would have infallibly broken down. The miscreant Stradlings would have won the day, and the noble-hearted Styles—who gives the dinner—would have been nowhere.

It is, in fact, in these legal hotels that witnesses may literally be said to live on the fat of the land. They are not proud. While better viands are getting ready they will make shift with a basin of mock-turtle, in which scraps of glutinous parchment appear to have been boiled in lieu of calves'-head. They will fill up an odd corner with a quarter of a pork-pie and half a pint of stout; nay, I have even seen teetotal witnesses (who are generally incoherent in the box, and virulently suspected of intoxication by the judge) punish the plaintiff's pocket pretty heavily in the way of Banbury cakes and lemonade. Country witnesses, whose stomachs are unused to waiting, and to whom kickshaws are as the idle wind which they regard not, are not above taking a substantial lunch from the joint at the Exchequer Dining-rooms; and as for by-drinks, and "quiet drains," and a cozy pipe and a glass of something hot, till that interminable trial of Hudge *versus* Gudge shall give place to the long-expected case of Stradlings *versus* Styles, their name is legion.

Of course there are, from time to time, stingy plaintiffs, and pauper plaintiffs, and attorneys who are chary in disbursing costs out of pocket. In these cases the witnesses don't live on the fat of the land, and injure the plaintiff's case accordingly; but there is one repast they must have by fair means or by foul—by the first it being understood that they are paid for, and by the second that they pay. They will have tea. The consumption of that refreshing and uninebriating beverage does not in the slightest degree interfere

with their appetite for stimulants; still, a witness without his tea is nothing. He takes it at all times between noon and five p.m.; but his tea he must and will have: a complete and perfect tea—not a mere cup of wishy-washy souchong, but supplemented by rounds of toast—the greasier the better—and a rasher of bacon, an egg, or an anchovy, by way of relish. The witness is generally a stranger in the land: he may have come from remote Camberwell, and his tea reminds him of his happy home. The young lady attendant at the coffee-shop is usually aware of her customer being a witness by his asking for the *Morning Advertiser*, which organ is not often taken in under the tea dispensation, and next by his subsiding into the placid perusal of *The Standard* of the day before yesterday. He reads of bygone trials and witnesses of the past, and buoys himself up, perchance, with the hope that his own fame will be wafted down to posterity by *The Standard* of to-morrow.

The witness, while he is in the chrysalis or grub state—I mean no pun—but his transition condition, before he develops into the full-grown butterflydom of the box, is lifted several hundred feet above his ordinary social altitude. He lives in another world. He has associates and intimates he would not have dreamt of being gregarious with, two days ago. He is made much of. He is a superior being. Barristers walk up and down Westminster Hall * arm-in-arm with him. Wealthy solicitors clap him on the shoulder, and tell him to stand firm. Baronets press his hand, and sometimes leave substantial tokens of their affection for him behind the pressure. Landlords are enjoined to take the utmost care of him. Pale-faced runners from the attorney's office are affected to his service, partially as body servants, partially as spies and guardians, to take care that he does not run away, that he does not throw himself into the arms of the other side, and, while they pamper him like a prize-pig, to prevent him from eating and drinking himself into a state of blind oblivion of his duties towards Stradlings and against Styles.

* This, of course, refers to a time anterior to the transfer of judicial business from Westminster to the New Law Courts in the Strand.

For witnesses are mortal men, even as voters at contested elections are, and will sometimes fade away from the paths of prudence.

By the way, now that I think of it, the witness, generically speaking, is almost identical in manners, custom, countenance, and conversation, with the voter! And voters are, like witnesses, a species of humanity typical and peculiar in their characteristics. I once had a vote for the county, but I never voted. I was made aware of being "seised" of a vote for some chambers in town, by the Radical party (my own, oh! bitter scorn) "fighting the battle of the constitution in the Registration Courts," and objecting, on some technical ground, to my qualification. They gained the day, but the victory was disastrous to them, as they had acted (aha!) under the erroneous impression that I was a red-hot Tory; but I humbly thank the revising barrister for striking my name off the register. What should I have done with a vote? Does it concern you, or me, or any other man, in the present pure and healthy state of the political atmosphere—save the regularly stamped, approved, and typical voter—whether Sir John Grampus or General Bounce be the man for Westminster?

There are times when the witness rises to the dignity of a public character; but it is more frequently in connection with an election petition before a parliamentary committee* than as a witness in one of the courts at Westminster, that he becomes remarkable. Take Giles Jolter, for instance, assistant-ostler at the Red Herring on Horseback, Chumpsford. The defeated candidate for the representation of that important borough in parliament has petitioned against the sitting member. It is the old story: bribery, corruption, treating, intimidation and the rest of it. The lawyers on both sides rub their hands and chuckle, for it is a fat case, which, on a moderate computation, will cost about fifty pounds an hour during hearing. Giles Jolter is brought, to his intense amazement, and for the first time in his life, from Chumpsford to London by express train. With him, perhaps, also as witnesses, may be Mr. Chaw-

* The hearing of election petitions had not been confided to her Majesty's judges at the time this paper was written.

chobbs, landlord of the Pickled Egg beer-shop, and two or three other agricultural worthies in hobnails and fustian. They all live on the before-mentioned fat of the land. They are in a continual state of beatitude, arising from unlimited feeds of bran-mash, oilcake, and scientifically-sliced mangel-wurzel. They might have Revalenta Arabica, Thorley's food, Indian pig-meal, for the asking for. They wax fat and kick, and their bones are full of marrow.

One of the pale-faced runners, selected for the post on the ground of his being a man about town, is detached to show them the sights and the lions of London. At the theatres you may see Chawchobbs fast asleep, with his head leaning on his arms, in the upper boxes. It would never do to take a valuable witness to the pit. At music-halls Giles Jolter's horse-collar grin pervades the stalls. He thinks the "Perfect Cure" the greatest terpsichorean marvel of the age, yet still offers to back himself for "half a poond" to "joomp agin him." He speculates upon the number of pints of ale consumed by "Any other Man," preparatory to his stump oration; and at night, when he returns to his lodgings, disturbs the whole house with unearthly yelps and rumblings, in his attempt to imitate the pleasing melody of "In the Strand—the Strand."

Nothing is spared, in short, to make Giles Jolter's witness-life a carnival of joy—this poor conscript of toilsome husbandry, who at home fares worse than the horses he helps to tend, and has but the "Union" to look forward to when his joints have grown too stiff for his task of currycombing and rubbing down!—but the scheme of his revelry has one curious omission. The lawyers have forgotten the requirements of Jolter and his comrades in the way of clothes. Chawchobbs has been snatched in haste and shirt-sleeves from his beer-shop bar, and when, in places of fashionable or convivial town resort, you come upon rough uncouth men, of peasant mien, clad in short smock-frocks fustian suits, billycock hats, monumental ankle-jacks, with rural clay scarce uncaked from them, and wonderful velveteen waistcoats, with double rows of mother-o'-pearl buttons, you may be

tolerably certain that a great election petition is on at Westminster, and that these are witnesses.

It comes to the turn of Giles Jolter to be examined. 'Tis not much he has to prove. Perhaps he only overheard the conversation in which the sitting member offered the head-ostler (who had a vote) nineteen guineas for a single hair out of the bay mare's tail; or perhaps he found three five-pound notes in the corn-chest, with "Vote for Peverill" on a scrap of paper pinned thereto; or it may be he was instructed carefully to waylay, discreetly to kidnap, and completely to fuddle Boolwang, the great radical of Chumpsford. As a rule, the parliamentary committee can make nothing of Giles Jolter. When he is probed for facts bearing on the case, he retails, in the Bœotian dialect, scraps of local scandal, damaging to county families of the highest standing.

Thus: Rubasore, Q.C. "Do you remember the thirteenth of June?"

To him Jolter: "Ay, sure-lye, 'twas t' day Squire Gargoyll laid t' horsewhip 'cross uns woife's shouthers i' the coach-house."

At a subsequent period of cross-examination Serjeant Squallop takes Jolter in hand.

"You say you saw Sir Norman Peverill at the Red Herring on Horseback. What was he doing?"

"*He wor toight.*"

"What do you mean, sir?"

"Whoy, droonk, tibby sure."

And the unequivocating Jolter bestows the horse-collar grin on the entire auditory (including Sir Norman Peverill, who sups at his club on a rusk and a glass of seltzer water), in humorous amusement at the simplicity of the learned serjeant, who does not know the meaning of the word "toight."

Not unfrequently Jolter himself appears, as he expresses it, "toight as a droom," and contemplates the august tribunal through a dense haze of beer. He has, in these cases, slipped away from his legal guides, philosophers, and friends, and, wearied with vinous and spirituous luxuries, betaken himself to

a rustic orgie of fourpenny ale in some Westmonasterian beer-shop, reminding him of his native Bœotia, in company with a sweep, a navigator, and two militiamen. Sometimes, in these moments of beery abandonment, he is pounced upon by a wary recruiting-sergeant, and forthwith enlisted in her Majesty's Forty-fourth Foot. More than once have parliamentary agents been compelled to pay "smart money" for the ransom of Giles Jolter.

By this time the assistant-ostler has become a public character. He wakes one morning with a headache and finds himself famous. "No more flagrant instance of the innate and incurable rottenness of our electoral system could be found, we think, than in the hideous tergiversation of the witness Jolter, in his evidence before the committee on the Chumpsford election petition"—thus commences a leading article in a daily newspaper, and G. is the hero of the first paragraph.

Matters, however, may grow serious, and the communicativeness of Giles may become as compromising as his reticence is embarrassing. At all hazards, the assistant-ostler must then be be got out of the way, and his cross-examination is cut short by his sudden disappearance. He is spirited away nobody knows whither. Of course the sitting member, and those eminent and astute parliamentary agents, Messrs. Weasle, Eylet, and Hole, are entirely ignorant of his whereabouts. Quick! a proclamation, two proclamations, half a dozen proclamations, for the apprehension of Giles Jolter! It passes comprehension, but it is still within the range of possibility, that the passenger in a blue cloak, with a fur collar, green spectacles, and a sealskin cap, who took the mail train from London to Pangbourne on such a night, was the recalcitrant Giles; nay, he has been seen, with no disguise at all, but in his normal fustian and hobnails, astounding the fisher-girls at Boulogne or Dunkirk with the horse-collar grin.

Then Giles is caught, and makes his appearance, quaking and blubbering, at the bar of the House of Commons, where, imagining in his perturbation that he is in peril for poaching, he

piteously assures their honours' worships that he "nivir tooched a rabbit in uns loife." The end of it is, that after the serjeant-at-arms—to the ineffable disgust of that courtly and bag-wigged functionary—has had charge of Giles for a day or two, he is committed to Newgate under the Speaker's warrant. And there the governor doesn't know what to do with him; and after a few weeks' incarceration, during which the Sunday papers write about him as a "martyr to oligarchical tyranny," the session comes to an end, and the Speaker's warrant, being by this time so much waste paper, Giles Jolter is discharged. Perhaps a subscription is opened for him in the columns of some red-hot journal, and the first week's list of contributions comprises: "A Foe to Despotism, 5s.;" "Brutus Britannicus, 2s. 6d.;" "Blood, or the Ballot, 1s.;" "One who hates M.P.'s, 9d. (weekly)," and so forth.

But Jolter subsides, and goes back to Bœotia and Chumpsford to tend his cattle, and is no more heard of. The great tribe of witnesses must submit to a similar fate. Their fame is but ephemeral. Their notoriety endures but for a day. They fade into nothingness and oblivion; in the great crowd they pass unnoticed; and it is only when you hang about the law courts and wear out, wearily, your shoe-leather in the Hall of the Lost Footsteps, that you single them out again, and watch their ways, and dive into their haunts. I never take up the report of a trial twenty years old without wondering what has become of all the witnesses. What a noise they made in the world, and into what complete forgetfulness they have drifted! As I lay down my pen, an Italian organ-grinder in the street beneath strikes up "Il balen." Confound those organ-grinders! Yet, stay, the brown stranger may be worth studying. Why, goodness, gracious! the name of his papa may have been Theodore Majocchi, that witness of witnesses; and the air ground on the paternal organ, not "Il balen," but "Non mi ricordi!" His father may have been a witness against Queen Caroline.

XI.

English Milords.

THE writer of this piece once upon a time, and in a foreign land, suffering from an attack of the megrims, or *diaboli cærulei*, sought solace and delectation in a place of public entertainment situated on the Boulevard Montmartre, in Paris, called the Salle Bonne-Nouvelle. Here, for the consideration of one franc, he was gratified by the view of a series of *poses plastiques;* of a remarkably stupid ballet, in which a floury-faced Pierrot went through the ordinary tribulations incidental to Pierrots when brought into collision with comic fathers, jealous millers, and village maidens in short petticoats; but all of which did not in the least remind him of the only supportable Pierrot in the tumbling world: the inimitable Debureau. He was furthermore entertained by a mysterious round or catch, sung by three persons in three white waistcoats and one pair and a half of kid gloves, which, together with the remaining pair and a half of hands, would have been none the worse for a little washing, and in which a large tuning fork supported a considerable part; by a "Juggler of the Alps," than whom the author has seen many better; and, finally, by a gentleman attired in a short green coat, labelled, conspicuously, "*Patente*" (*sic*), a pair of widely checked trousers, also labelled "*Patente*," with the addition of the royal arms of Great Britain beneath the label; highlows and gaiters, a white hat with a narrow brim and a black hat-band, a huge shirt-collar, a gigantic umbrella, red hair, green spectacles, a very diminutive carpet bag and a long pig-tail, each and all branded with the omnipresent "*Patente;*" who, as an obliging neighbour of the writer informed

him, was made up to represent a *Milord Anglais*, and looked the character—as that neighbour further volunteered to tell him—remarkably well.

This British nobleman sang a song to the old tune of "Malbrook," accompanied by some feeble gesticulations imitative but not suggestive of the noble art of self-defence. The writer, on his affirmation, declares that, as nearly as he can recollect, the first verse of the English peer's song ran thus :—

Malbrook s'en va-ti li Boxe
L'ami de Pitt et Fox,
Aow yes! Aow yes!

Each couplet being interpolated with an "Aow yes!" and each stanza being concluded by a facetious and profoundly ironical allusion to one "Matinkosh," probably synonymous or connected with that waterproof garment so useful in travelling. The Milord's song was encored amidst the most enthusiastic demonstrations of approval and delight; but the writer, being momentarily diverted from the stage and orchestra by a supplementary entertainment, or *pièce de circonstance*, not in the bill of the evening—consisting in the scampering of three mice through the pit, and the heroic efforts of the *sapeur-pompier* on duty to capture and immolate them with his sabre—did not enjoy the repetition of a ditty so flattering to his national pride, and soon afterwards left the Salle Bonne-Nouvelle, and walked home.

Now I, who am the writer, as I walked through the snow, thought of a certain Emperor,* who, like the man who won an elephant at a raffle, won four hundred thousand armed men in a *coup*, and didn't know what to do with them; of the Peace Congress; of the militia, our naval defences, the Minié rifle, the conical bullet, screw steamers and the Digue at Cherbourg; also, of the stupendous amount of international ignorance existing in the two greatest countries in the world—of how little the English know about the character and customs of the French, of how much less the French know about those of the English.

* Napoleon III.

The origin of the English Milord, as brought under French consideration, is either lost in the mists of obscurity, or is beyond my ken. But the English Milord was looked upon in France as a species of drunken savage, frequently cutting other people's throats, and not unfrequently going raving mad, tyrannising over his dependants, and mercilessly beating his wife and children, until about the middle of the reign of Louis Quatorze, the *grand monarque*. In those days the restoration of Charles the Second taking place, and the exemplary Count Anthony Hamilton and others of his class being a good deal backwards and forwards from Paris to London, the French nobility condescended to discover and admit that their brother peers in England could be every whit as heartless, as politely depraved, as fashionably blasphemous, as genteelly corrupted, as urbanely insulting, as wittily insolent, as "honourably" dishonest, as they were themselves. Thenceforth, and for a time, the Milord looked up. The offensive nickname was temporarily withdrawn, and he became the *Seigneur*—the *Grand Seigneur Anglais*. Molière condescended to nod to him. La Fontaine patronised him. Boileau would dedicate his next ode to him. But one, Milord Cavendish, who threw an insolent *petit-maître* on to the spikes of the orchestra of the Opera House, brought the Milord into ill odour again. After the revolution, after the numerous Jacobite conspiracies of King William's time, after the first Scotch rebellion, when the Continent teemed with disaffected Scotch and Irish noblemen and officers—the Milord became once more a gryphon, a bogie, a hideous fable.

Voltaire, who ought to have known England and the English well, is rather shy on the subject of the English Milord. He shirks him. He treats of him a little in his "Siècle de Louis XV.," concerning the battle of Fontenoy; he tells you elsewhere that the Milord is one of that bizarre country where they "cut off the tails of horses and the heads of kings"; but on the whole, he is reserved and taciturn on the subject of the English Milord. He *knew him* and the ridiculously false impression entertained of him by the French; but he did not, doubtless, consider it worth his while to undeceive them just then.

Rousseau hated English Milords as he hated most people who strove to do him good (which many English noblemen and gentlemen essayed to do). There is spleen against the English nation and aristocracy scattered through his writings; but the philosophic citizen and "philanthropist" of Geneva knew too well what England and the English were, systematically to abuse or vilify them. Yet he upset no fallacy, exposed no error. In the "Nouvelle Héloïse" he has even gone out of the way to misrepresent the Milord: who assumes the guise of a morosely pensive misanthrope, skulking about cataracts and mentally browsing in deserted grottoes.

So continued the English Milord to the time of that old novelist of Louis Seize's time, Pigault Lebrun, the only palliation of whose indelicacy lies in his always making virtue to prevail and vice to be chastised at the end of volume III. Pigault Lebrun's Milord was an austere yet ruffianly, proud yet jocose, avaricious yet munificent, accomplished yet coarse-spoken aristocrat—a sort of *mélange* of Squire Western, Sir Charles Grandison, Pigault's own Monsieur Botte, Voltaire's Doctor Pangloss, and our English Commodore Trunnion. He travelled about in a postchaise, fitted up half as a tavern, half as a doctor's shop, always with a beautiful daughter, always with a negro page whom he beat and kicked and gave unnumbered guineas to. He swore tremendous oaths at postilions. He was the terror of postmasters, cooks, scullions, innkeepers, and chambermaids. Lastly, he had an irresistible *penchant* for adopting orphan children (boys), and ultimately marrying them to the charming Miss, his daughter and sole heiress.

Pigault Lebrun lived far into the Empire; but the time and scene of his novels are mostly laid at a period anterior to the Great Revolution. In the days of the Republic, the Directory, and the Consulate, the Milord Anglais assumed quite a new phase of character. He became, all at once, an emissary of "Pitt et Cobourg," always hovering about the frontier of France, or mingling in disguise among its population; went about laden with sacks of English gold wherewith to bribe the enemies of freedom.

The English Milord kept head against the *bleus* in the impenetrable *bocâges* of the Vendée; his gold it was that kept the army of Condé organised, nerved the conspirators of the infernal machine to their desperate attempt, and brought Georges Cadoudal and his murderous Chouans to Paris. The contagious breath of English Milords (headed by that arch Milord Nelson,) blew the flat-bottomed boats of Boulogne to the winds, and caused that *regrettable sinistre*, Trafalgar.

When the fatal obtuseness of the Milord Wellington, who never could discover when he was beaten, had brought (treason aiding) the allied armies to Paris, the English Milord, chameleon-like, once more changed his hue. Then was he first heard of as a boxer, as an eater of raw beefsteaks, as a maker of tremendous *paris* or bets, and as a monomaniacal amateur in horseflesh. The English being just then the strongest, and being through their upholding of the house of Bourbon on good terms with the French aristocracy, there was in Paris, from 1815 to 1818, a species of Anglomania or Milordophobia in which the Milord Anglais was the *arbiter elegantiarum*, the "cynosure of all eyes," "the glass of fashion and the mould of form."

Novelists, dramatists, essayists, artists immediately seized on the new English Milord and made a lion of him. He was represented in the salons of Frascati and the gambling rooms of the Palais Royal, wrenching handfuls of sovereigns from the pockets of his great-coat with many capes, and throwing them wildly on the *rouge* and the *noir*. He had horses in his drawing-room and "bouledogues" in his bed. He boxed continually. He drove vehicles like cockle shells (or like those rendered so famous by Mr. Romeo Coates and Mr. Pea-green Hayne), he dined sumptuously at Véry's and Vefour's, and he drank (which is perhaps the only thing of the series that the English Milord did really and truly do, during the occupation of Paris by the allies) enormous quantities of execrable champagne, which he thought delicious. That champagne plot was the greatest, sweetest, most ample revenge the French ever took upon us for Waterloo; and the disgrace of that day has been, to my mind, completely washed

out by the floods of bad champagne which were foraged out from the cellars of Reims in 1815, bought by speculators at about seventy-five centimes a bottle, and sold to the English and the Cossacks at about from six to ten francs. Was not *that* vengeance on the Islanders and the Barbarians?

The English Milord once more changed during the latter part of the reign of Louis XVIII. and the whole of that of Charles X. There was a famous piece called "Les Anglaises pour rire," performed at the Palais Royal, in which not only Milords but Miladis were ridiculed, and which had an astonishing run. After this the "censure," the gloom-inspiring domination of the Jesuits, and the novels of the Vicomte d'Arlincourt, with, perhaps, some ugly shreds of news from England about Luddites, and spies, and Thistlewood with his head off, made the English Milord quite a different character. He became a stiff-necked, morose, gloomy *grand seigneur*, terribly affected with a mysterious malady called *le spleen* (there is a three-volume novel about one Sir Williams, afflicted with that ailment), travelling austerely about Europe with a sulky suite, and two *fourgons* full of sauces and French cooks.

According to M. de Balzac (when he was M. de Viellerglé)—who was so fond of depicting English Milords, that he occasionally wrote himself under the pseudonym of one Lord R'hoone (!)—the Milord Anglais lived hermetically sealed up in a frowning hotel with high walls, a mulatto porter, fierce wolf-dogs, and one little garden door of egress, from whence he was supposed to issue to accomplish all sorts of dark and dreadful deeds. According to M. Casimir Delavigne, and M. Alexandre Dumas, in the early days of their dramaturgical career, the Milord had no longer beautiful daughters, but always one son, Sir Arthur, a villain, continuously breaking promises of marriage to confiding French females, and throwing his helpless offspring on the hands of his papa, who at first would have nothing to say to them, and cursed them, his son and daughter-in-law, with all the forms, but, ultimately, relenting, endowed them with his enormous estates, and the insignia of the order of the

Bath. The Milord Anglais of that day had strange fancies for ascending Mount Vesuvius during eruptions, holding grim champagne and "porto" orgies in the catacombs of Rome, poisoning his servants, shooting brigands, and writing letters in his own blood. Horrible nobleman!

The tragic Milord disappeared after the Revolution of July '30, to give place to an eccentric one. There was a semi-serious one about 1843, who was supposed to have made an enormous bet that Mr. Van Amburg would one day be devoured alive by his wild animals, and always followed him about from country to country, and from theatre to theatre, always occupying the stage box, and fixing on him the foci of an enormous opera glass. This Milord had green eyes! In Louis Philippe's time, however, eccentricity became, as I have said, the distinguishing character of the English Milord. He dressed—in the press, on the stage, and on canvas—in a bell-crowned white hat, a long loose white great-coat, red striped small-clothes, top-boots, a mighty shawl swathed round his flaming countenance, a plaid waistcoat, an umbrella, and a pigtail of course. One or more savage "bouledogues" always lurked at his heels.

His course of life might be summed up with considerable facility, so regular was it. He rose at ten, breakfasted off raw beefsteaks and *vin de Porto*, playing with his bouledogues and smoking a pipe meanwhile. At eleven he had the spleen. From half-past eleven to twelve he betted with his coachman; from twelve to one he boxed with his groom; from one to two he drank gin or "grogs;" at half-past two he sold his wife, Miss Kitty, in Smithfield, with a halter round her neck; from three to four he drove tandem in Cheapside—four horses at length; from four to five he had another refresher of beefsteaks with "porter beer;" from five till midnight he bet, drank, smoked, and boxed with other lords, and after an indefinite number of pipes, bets, and grogs, fell *ivre mort* against an "*honourable baronet, membre de la chambre des lords,*" and was carried up to bed by his groom, or tiger—Joby, Toby, or Paddy. If I have exaggerated one trait in the character of the English Milord,

tell, oh ye authors of "Les Mystères de Londres," "Le Marché de Londres," "Les Voleurs de Londres," and "Clarisse Harlowe." Towards the end of the reign of Louis Philippe, the Milord Anglais varied the course of his diary by occasionally oppressing Ireland, and sucking the life-blood from the slaves of Hindostan. It also occurred to him to turn perfidious; "French commerce to destroy, and reserve to himself the empire of the seas." The Milord was then and for some time known as a "Pritchard,"* but the salient parts of his character remained the same.

After the Revolution of February '48, and the exchange of visits between English excursionists and French National Guards, one more, and as far as it has gone, ultimate change took place in the counterfeit presentment of the Milord Anglais. He became purely but extravagantly ridiculous, wearing the egregious costume and speaking the barbarous balderdash of the Salle Bonne-Nouvelle. As such he flourishes at all the theatres, and in all the *feuilletons* of Paris; at Valentino, in caricatures, and in the *Journal pour Rire*, and as such is taken for granted, though there are hundreds of well-dressed Englishmen walking daily about the Boulevards and the Rue de Rivoli, offering a fair field for caricature, and not in the least like him.

Now whatever, I ask, can have propagated, nourished, perpetuated for nearly a hundred years this monstrous ignorance of what Englishmen are like, of what they do, of how they act, of what are their manners and customs? Heaven knows we have prejudices enough to get rid of, and mistakes enough to correct in our own country concerning foreigners; yet, ignorant as we are, I think were an actor, representing the part of a Frenchman, to appear in an English theatre wearing a pigtail and a cocked hat, eating frogs, and accompanying the operation with a solo on a dancing-master's kit, the calumniator would be hooted or pelted from the stage. With an eleven hours'

* Pritchard was British consul at Tahiti, and was expelled thence by the French in 1844, a few months after they assumed their protectorate over the island. The incident nearly gave rise to a war between England and France.

route from London to Paris, with railways and a submarine telegraph, with myriads of Frenchmen in our streets, the French seem really to know less of us every day. Balzac said that there were only three Frenchmen in France who could speak French: Victor Hugo, Théophile Gautier, and himself. It might almost be said, without exaggeration, that there are only three people in France who know England and the English: to wit, M. Léon Faucher, M. Guizot, and that certain Personage before alluded to in connexion with the elephant in the raffle.

There may perchance be found some little excuse for the ridiculously false notion the French have formed of our habits, institutions, and literature, our good and bad points, in the eccentricities of a certain class of travellers who infest foreign seaports, railways, and hotels, and are the bane and nuisance and standing scoff thereof. Why don't they stay at home? They go back to their own country more ignorant (if possible) than when they started. They grumble at dinner, insult landlords and waiters, pertinaciously cling together to avoid learning the language of the country they are in, and then abuse and vilify each other, and moan and fret because they can't speak it. They carry with them their grievances and prejudices, and sectarian hatreds and narrowmindedness, their ladies'-maids (confound them!) and their physic bottles. They are good friends and honest people, but the worst travelling companions in the world.

It is not through any private or personal griefs that I pass these strictures on the conduct of some of my countrymen travelling abroad; but it is because I think that if a certain section of them were to stay at home, or, when they travel, were to think what the great ends of travelling should be—improvement, observation, and sensible recreation, with a reasonable deference to peculiarities, a little subservience to custom, a little less ill-temper, and a little more docility and willingness to learn —the Milord Anglais would be somewhat more fairly drawn.

XII.

Legs.

IT has always struck me that a great void exists in popular physiology from the comparative neglect with which it has treated the legs of mankind. Many and heavy folios have been written on the subject of the heart, the brain, the nerves, and the lungs. Some men have thrown themselves on the kidneys with admirable spirit and perseverance; a very large section of medical and physiological writers have devoted themselves to the stomach with an ardour and erudition worthy of our sincerest admiration; while others have attacked blood with a keen gusto and relish that have been productive of the most gratifying results to the cause of science. Sir Charles Bell wrote an elaborate and delightful treatise on the Hand. Still we are lamentably deficient in our knowledge of the Leg. Satisfied with the possession of that indispensable member, our pathologists and physiologists seem to consider it as quite unworthy of attention; and, but for a few meagre treatises on the gout and on varicose veins, an occasional advertisement "To those with tender feet," emanating from some commercially-minded shoemaker, and the periodical recapitulation of the royal and noble cures of a great corn-cutter and his brother chiropodists, we might as well, for the mental attention we bestow upon our legs and feet, be so many Miss Biffins.

Fashion, even, that ubiquitous and capricious visitant of the human form divine, has looked coldly upon legs. While the shirt of man within the last few years has undergone as many improvements, annotations, emendations, illustrations, and transformations as the text of an Act of Parliament; while the human

shirt-collar has enjoyed a perfect Ovidian series of metamorphoses; whilst each succeeding season has brought changes vast and radical into the constitution of ladies' sleeves and men's wristbands; while the collars of coats and the flounces of dresses have continually changed their shapes like the chimera, and their colours like the chameleon; while the bonnet of beauty has fallen from its cocked-up elevation on the frontal bone to its accumbent position on the dorsal vertebræ; while even that conservative institution, the hat of man, has fluctuated between the chimney-pot and the D'Orsay, the wide-awake and the Jim-Crow, the guerilla and the Kossuth, and the Garibaldi and the Spanish turban; while all these multifarious transitions of the other parts of our garb have taken place, the coverings of the leg and the foot have been the least susceptible to the attacks of time, and fashion, and convenience.

The British high-low has remained unchangeable for heaven knows how many years; the wellington is the same boot that spurred Copenhagen's sides o'er the field of Waterloo; even the tasselled hessian, though it has seen its coeval pig-tail sink into the limbo of oblivion, is yet worshipped in secret by devout votaries; abbreviated continuations of black silk, kerseymere, plush, corduroy, cord and leather, yet shine in the Court, the Diplomatic Service, the servants' hall, the hunting-field, and the charity-school. Prejudice has tried to banish shorts, and Invention to improve upon stockings; the whole results of centuries of trousers wearing (the ancient Gauls wore them: see Braccæ) have been in the ridiculous items of straps and stripes down the sides; and apparently despairing of the possibility of doing anything for legs in the improvement line, fashion has left legs alone. The world, following, like an obedient slave as it is, upon fashion's heels, has quite neglected and forgotten legs. Philosophy has turned the cold shoulder upon them, the dramatist has scouted them,* and the epic poet has disdained them. Legs have fallen to the province of mountebanks, tight-rope dancers, acrobats, and ballet girls. From

* This was written before the rage for so-called "leg pieces."

neglect they have fallen into opprobrium; and we cannot find a baser term for a swindling gambler than to call him a "leg."

Yet only consider the immense importance of legs! What should we be without them? Ask that infinitely poor and miserable person, a bed-ridden man. To be deprived of the blessed faculty of locomotion at will—not to possess that glorious privilege of riding "Shanks's mare," or of taking the "Marrow-bone stage;" of bidding defiance to stage-coaches, carriages, cabs, and railway trains; of feeling the firm earth beneath our tread; of footing it over the daisies, or strolling over the velvety sward, of climbing the hill, or descending the valley, or paddling through the brook: to be unable to take a walk, in fact, is to be deprived of nine tithes of our pleasures here below, of half our capacity for enjoyment, of nearly all our faculty of observation. A man may learn with his legs very nearly as much as he can with his eyes; and he learns it more cheerfully, more genially, more naturally. It was a true word spoken in jest, that named the legs the understandings. A great walker is nearly always a contented, happy, and philosophically observant man. The free use of his legs makes the penny postman satisfied with his twenty-five shillings a-week, reconciles the policeman to his weary night watch, solaces the sentinel on his guard, makes the ploughboy whistle as he follows his team, the milkmaid balance her pails merrily, and the pedlar carry his pack as if it were a pleasure. Legs are a consolation in trouble, and the grand remover of spleen, care, and evil humours. The first thing that a man does when he is immured in jail is to walk about (if so he be allowed) his prison yard. If you have been angry with your brother, or if your wife has vexed you, or your affairs are in gloomy case, or your periodical hatred of the world and those that are in it come upon you, you cannot do better than "walk it off."

In infancy what intense interest is concentrated upon legs! We watch the first endeavours to walk of a little child with as much, if not more, interest and anxiety than its first attempts to speak. We seem to look upon articulation as upon one of Nature's spontaneous good gifts which will come in its own good

time; but to teach the child the use of its legs, and to watch over the proper development of his paces—from the shaky, ill-balanced toddle to the straight, strong step—seem to require all our energies and caution and attention. Heavens! what tortures mothers must endure, what heroic sacrifices they would submit to, to avert the horrible possibility of baby being bandy! However remiss science and erudition may have been, the poorer classes appreciate legs. They know of what infinite service those extremities will be to the child—how absolutely indispensable they will one day become, in conjunction with the hands, as bread-winners. They fondle and admire their children's legs; they recommend them passionately as objects for care and prudence to the child-nurses who carry the babies. It is only among this strongly-feeling class, and not among the apathetic rich, that I have heard such a term applied to a child's extremities as "his blessed legs."

Consider of what huge importance legs are to high as well as low. Lord Viscount Protocol, sitting down on the Treasury Bench, is but a mean little man with a broad-rimmed hat pulled over his eyes; but, "on his legs," he is Cicero in eloquence, Demosthenes in delivery, Grattan in force of invective. The due management of the legs is the soul of military discipline; an army that did not keep step would be beaten by a Calmuck corporal. Legs carry the hod up ladders, with the mortar that cements the stones of our Victoria Tower. The agile use of our legs will remove us from within the deadly presence of the officer of the Sheriff of Middlesex, furnished with a warrant for our arrest, and will convey us swiftly out of his bailiwick—a process of evasion denominated "leg bail."

The leg is the most honoured part of the body. It opens the ball with queens; its foot treads the carpet of thrones; without it Edward the Third could never have instituted the most honourable Order of the Garter. Do you think the Pope's Legate is so called because he is *legatus*, sent? No! it is because of his legs clothed in his cardinal's red stockings. What would Louis the Fourteenth have been without the padding on his legs and the high heels to his shoes? He would have been *le petit* Monarque.

What would monumental brasses and Templars' tombs be without the crossed legs of the knights and barons? Could our coats, our vests, our continuations, have been fashioned in all ages without the cross-legged tailors? The gravity of the Turk, the wisdom of his beard, the splendour of his yataghan, the perfume of his chibouk and the aroma of his coffee, would be as naught without his papouche-feeted legs folded under him on the cushioned divan.

Passing from honour to dishonour, we must not forget that to punish a man's legs and feet is the most dreadful infliction short of death in the East; and to know the true value of legs you should be some miserable bastinadoed Turkish or Egytian wretch crawling on your stomach from the court of justice, where the Cadi has just ordered you five hundred blows of the bastinado on your feet. The human legs have it in their power to confer the most grievous insult to human honour that is known. The hand can slap, the arm can strike, the head can butt, but it is the leg that directs the foot to confer the deadly kick; and it is a retributory leg and foot that steps out the twelve paces when the kick is washed out in blood. The legs have it in their power to conduct us to the topmost rounds of Ambition's ladder; to carry us, at the head of the forlorn hope, into the crumbling, smoking breach; with our legs we trample on the carcasses of our enemies, and scamper over obstacles, and run that race of fortune which, for all our legs, is not always to the swift; with our huge legs we "bestride the narrow world like a Colossus," and make petty men creep under them.

But, O! our legs often play us sorry tricks. Bad legs, wicked legs, untrustworthy legs, they lead us to sorrow and shame, and danger and death. Ensign Whitefeather would have been as brave a young officer as ever waved a pair of colours, but for those pusillanimous legs of his, which ran away with him so shamefully at the siege of Ticonderago. It was Private Swabbins's knavish legs that caused him to abscond from barracks with his regimental necessaries, and that took him to a marine-store shop in Back Lane, Chatham, where he sold said necessaries; and what but his legs enticed him to the beer-shop where he spent his ill-gotten earnings?

It was his legs that brought him to be tried by court-martial, and that conducted him to the military prison at Fort Clarence.

Those that have sinned by their legs suffer by their legs; as the shameful stocks, and the *galériens* of the French *bagnes*, the manacled convicts of our dockyards, and the leg-chained street-sweepers of the Italian towns can testify. Those likewise, who abuse their legs by running about to strange alehouses, and standing at gin-shop bars, first get unsteady on their legs, and then their legs slide away from under them, and forsake them utterly, and they fall into the shame of the gutter, and the ignominy of the mud. Badly disposed legs carry otherwise virtuously minded men into gambling houses, broils and contentions; they lead them in quarrels to interpose, by which they oft-times get an ensanguined nose; finally, dissipation must have legs, else how would it enable its votaries to "run through" their property, and "outrun the constable?"

The times have been when the legs have not been deemed unworthy of performing sacerdotal functions. Many were the choregraphic solemnities of the old temples of Eleusis and Ephesus and Memphis. The priests of Baal had sacerdotal orgies. The witches in Macbeth danced. The fakirs of India leap, and the dervishes of Stamboul whirl on the tips of their toes, and there are Hindoo fanatics who hope to go to heaven by standing, flamingo-wise, upon one leg.

How many and what magnificent fortunes have been made by nothing but legs? Clad in pink tights, those extremities have gathered millions of golden pieces from the opera stage. Say, ye Anatoles, ye Vestrises, ye Carlotta Grisis, ye Taglionis married to Russian princes, ye Ceritos, ye Elsslers and ye Duvernays, what would you have been without your legs? Say, ye English and continental managers, how often have you escaped bankruptcy through the legs of your figurantes and the judicious selection of ballets, otherwise "leg pieces." Captain Barclay walked himself into a comfortable annuity; and I understand that more than one professional pedestrian has realised a handsome competency by moving his legs a thousand miles in a thousand hours.

Setting riches on one side, what numbers of industrious persons there are who earn their daily bread by their legs. At the very moment I write a company of acrobats are vaulting, leaping, tumbling, climbing, standing with their legs on each other's heads beneath my window. At an adjoining exhibition hall, Professor Squadaccini, and his three talented sons, nightly tie their legs into knots and raise them to a level with their shoulders for a living. Madame Saqui has supported herself on her legs (on the tight-rope) since the days of the first French Revolution. Blondin, by virtue of the same accessories, realises as large an income as a Cabinet Minister. Clowns, rope-dancers, tumblers and mountebanks of every description, would starve were it not for their legs. Even the ragged little street Bedouin who tumbles cartwheels by the side of your cab as you come from the railway-station; the brown-faced, ragged, scarlet-jacketed varlet who follows the hounds with bare feet; the Ethiopian Serenaders, who reverberate the tambourines on their knees, their shins and the soles of their feet; the little Highland-dressed children who dance on the scrap of carpet in the muddy street, all look to their legs, as an auxiliary, if not a means, of subsistence. Nay, the piteous cripple of Italian extraction, who sits in the truck beside the barrel organ upon which the other exile grinds melancholy tunes; the stunted Jack-in-the-water, paddling about, without legs, in his little canoe; and the legless beggar on the little platform on rollers, who pushes himself along by means of instruments, something between dumbbells and railway buffers, support themselves indirectly by their legs; for passers-by remember sympathisingly that they had legs once, and relieve their leglessness with moneys.

If the heart be the stronghold of vitality, the legs are the outposts of life. The legs die first. The outposts are captured before the citadel is stormed. Mrs. Quickly put her hand upon poor dying Sir John Falstaff's legs, and they were "as cold as a stone." We speak of a man likely to die, that he will come out of the house "feet foremost." We say of one that is dead, that he has "turned his toes up." No one can mistake a dead man's legs. Put them in fishermen's boots, swathe them in fifty yards of sheeting, and

you could not mistake them. Not many days since, at my dear old Dumbledowndeary, a man fell from the topmast of a Dutch vessel in the river on to the deck. They brought him to the jetty in a boat, covering the body with a tarpaulin, while medical assistance was sent for. I can see now the cold, gloomy, grey February day; the knot of idlers on the jetty, a solitary gull rising from the marshes opposite with dull flapping wings, and, swaying fitfully in the rising tide beneath, the wounded man lying at full length in the boat, and, standing in the thwarts over him. one of his mess-mates, a clumsy, tallow-faced Dutchman, with a huge fur cap and earrings, who was wringing his honest tarry hands and crying out that he loved him; all the while the tears trickling down his face and pattering sharply, like commencing rain, as they fell on the tarpaulin. But we needed not the verdict of the doctor to know that the man in the boat was dead. None but a dead man could have had the legs, stark, stiff, awful, which we saw protruding from the tarpaulin as the boat rowed to shore.

I am not at all a believer in "graphiology," and have never been tempted to send specimens of my handwriting, accompanied by a certain number of postage stamps, to Professor Anybody. Neither do I hold by those theorists who assert that all bald-headed men ill-treat their wives; neither do I swear by those who believe that all red-headed people are hypocrites. But I am a believer in the idea that a man's character can be tolerably well deciphered from his face; and I would advise all physiognomists who are of my opinion, to extend their scrutiny from a person's visage to his legs. The advantages to science would be incalculable. I have found it of prodigious service to me in my speculations upon the characters of mankind. There are as infinite varieties of expression in legs as in faces, and I wait with impatience for the day when some learned man shall give to the world an elaborate commentary on all the legs he has met with: the long and the short, the thick and the thin, the bandy and the bow, the in-kneed and the out-toed.

We are told that we can tell a man by the company he keeps; why not by the legs that take him into that company?

XIII.

Stone Pictures.

ONCE upon a time there was a saint (still flourishing in the calendar) called Aloysius; a Latinised connection, I am induced to think, of our old friend, St. Eloi, so famous for his rebuke to the good king Dagobert, touching the slovenliness of his toilet. After this saint was christened, towards the close of the last century, the child of poor parents, in the good old Catholic, art-loving, beer-bibbing Munich. This little Aloysius, growing up to manhood, was known amongst his fellows as Aloys Senefelder; and some of my readers may have heard of him as the inventor of lithography.

Aloys Senefelder had the misfortune to be one of the garret school of inventors. His life was a struggle; and although he lived to see his invention spread over all the world almost, he never achieved world-wide fame; and died anything but a millionaire. Inventors are wiser now. They take care to associate their names with their discoveries. We cannot wear waterproof coats without calling to mind Mr. Macintosh. We must think of M. Daguerre a little while sitting for our *carte de visite*, and, down in a coal-mine, the sight of a safety-lamp must surely call up some thoughts of Sir Humphrey Davy. Had poor Aloys Senefelder (dead in Munich yonder, without statue or testimonial) called his invention Senefeldography, or the Aloysotype, he might possibly have snatched some little modicum of posthumous fame, whereas now the present generation know scarcely anything about him.

I like the quaint legends—the little anecdotical *ana* attached

to the inventions whose origin we cannot always understand. I like the story of the apple that fell on good Sir Isaac Newton's nose; of Dr. Franklin and his kite; of little Benjamin West inventing the camera obscura, in his darkened bedroom, when getting well of a fever, and little dreaming—mild young Quaker—that somebody else had invented it two years before on the other side of the Atlantic, four thousand miles away! Most of all do I affect the traditional anecdotes relative to painting and engraving. Touching the last, it is curious that nearly all the legends concerning it should be connected with that very humble adjunct to domestic economy, the wash-tub. A bundle of wet linen, thrown on a steel cuirass, which had been engraved in *aniello*, and on which a faint impression of the pattern came off was the germ of plate engraving—the little *radiculum* from which the works of Woollet, and Landseer, and Cousens were to spring. A hard day's wash, souring the always somewhat acrid temper of Dame Alice, wife of Master Albert Durer, drove him for refuge to his wood-blocks, and goaded him to the devising of that marvellous art of cross-hatching, in wood-engraving, as lost and ignored for centuries afterwards as the cunning trick of staining ruby glass, or tempering poignard blades. And, lastly, comes the legend of Aloys Senefelder's invention of lithography, which I will narrate presently.

Senefelder was what some people would call an universal genius, and others, less respectfully, a Jack-of-all-trades. He could do a little of everything, but not much of anything. He could paint a little, and engrave a little, and play the fiddle a little, and copy music, and compose, and write poetry. He was not lucky. He burned to publish, but publishers would have none of his works; managers refused his operas, connoisseurs looked coldly on his pictures, singers declined to sing his songs, or to listen to his fiddle-playing. Moreover, the poor fellow found out that copper-plates were very expensive, that credit was difficult to be obtained, that printing costs money, and that paper was not to be had gratis. When he found that he could not get printers to bestow type-metal on his manuscripts, he essayed to engrave

them on copper, and to have them struck off by a new species of surface printing.

Reversing the process of etching, where the design is eaten or corroded into the plate, he proposed to write on the copper with a peculiar composition of wax and resin, which should withstand the action of acid; then to corrode away the blank portions of copper left untouched, and so leave the letters written in relief. But he found that it was exceedingly difficult to write backwards, and more difficult still to correct any errors; he burnt his fingers with aquafortis, which persisted in biting the plate in little pools or holes, instead of lowering it equally; and, worst of all, the mercenary coppersmith refused to let him have any more plates, and poor Aloysius was in despair. I have no doubt, moreover, that Frau Senefelder, his mother, did not lead him a very quiet life, but objected strongly against "poking, and messing, and pottering with nasty plates and things," and was frequently moved to wrath by the holes burnt in her blankets by aquafortis, and the spoiling of her clean floors with melted wax and resin, and the lamp-blacking of her tablecloth, and the abduction of her best worsted stockings for plate-rubbers.

Now Aloys, not being able to procure any new plates, bethought himself of the expediency of rubbing the engraving off some of the old ones and polishing them up for fresh use. He found, however, that most of the rotten-stone and emery he used for polishing were not subtle enough; they were so coarse that they made more scratches on the plate than they removed. In this dilemma he called to mind that there were stones found on the banks of the river Isere, very soft and very calcareous, and thus suited to his purpose. He procured some of these stones—first small pieces, then larger ones; but found still that as his stock of stone increased, his provision of copper decreased in most lamentable disproportion. It was all very well to have plenty of stone powder to polish his plates with; but, without plates to polish, the powder was about as useful to him as the ruffles to the man who had no shirt, or a gridiron to the beefsteakless. He tried to etch subjects on the stone itself, but

aquafortis made the stone effervesce, and refuse to be bitten to a sufficient depth to hold printing-ink.

Aloys was in despair. For a while he meditated the abandonment of his darling printing theories, and of resuming the study of jurisprudence, to which his father had, previous to his death, devoted him. But there were college fees to be paid at the University of Ingoldstadt, whither he was desirous of returning; and that "perpetual want of pence, that vexeth public men," again stood in his way. In his extremity he became positively desperate—infatuated, insane enough to contemplate the possibility of earning money by writing for the stage! A comedy was the result of this madness. A few weeks' dancing attendance and airing of his tendon Achilles about the Munich theatres, a few insults from stage-doorkeepers and rebuffs from candle-snuffers, brought him to his senses, and convinced him that the career of a dramatic author was one leading to weeping and wailing and gnashing of teeth. So he went home to his mother, and lived for some time, how I know not—he had not much knowledge on the subject, I dare say, himself—but still he lived. There are thousands of men in London who live in a similar manner. Employment, income, have they none: they cannot dig—to beg they are ashamed; they do not steal—yet they must eat, and drink, and sleep.

But Aloys' hope, though bent, was not broken, and desire came, bringing with it a tree of life, when his heart was very sick indeed. Let the simple-hearted inventor tell the story his own way:—

"I had just succeeded," he writes in 1819, "in polishing stone plate, which I intended to cover with etching-ground, in order to continue my exercises in writing backwards, when my mother entered the room, and desired me to write her a bill for the washerwoman, who was waiting for the linen. I happened not to have even the smallest slip of paper at hand, as my little stock of paper had been entirely exhausted by taking proof impressions from the stones; nor was there even a drop of ink in the inkstand. As the matter would not admit of delay, and

we had nobody in the house to send for a supply of the deficient materials, I resolved to write the list with my ink prepared with wax, soap, and lampblack on the stone which I had just polished, and from which I could copy it at leisure. Some time after this, I was just going to wipe this writing from the stone, when the idea all at once struck me to try what would be the effect of such a writing with my prepared ink if I were to bite in the stone with aquafortis; and having bitten away to about the hundredth part of an inch, I found that I could charge the lines with printing-ink, and take successive impressions. Thus the new art was invented."

In the course of Senefelder's experiments, he found it was not necessary that the letters or drawing should be raised above the surface of the stone, and that the chemical principles by which grease and water are kept from uniting were alone sufficient for his purpose. In fact, the grammar of lithography has its basis on this principle: grease loathes water—has for it a regular Johnsonian, Corsican, inextinguishable hatred. Water, on its side, hates grease. Now, the granular calcareous limestone used in lithography loves both water and grease, receiving the latter, indeed, with astonishing avidity, and demanding fresh oleaginous supplies with a rapacity only equalled by the female members of the horseleech family. A drawing being made upon the stone with an ink or crayon of a greasy composition, is washed over with water, which sinks into all the parts of the stone not defended by the drawing. A cylindrical roller, charged with printing-ink, is then passed all over the stone, and the drawing receives the ink, whilst the water defends the other part of the stone from it on account of its greasy nature.

In this we have the whole A, B, C—the accidence of lithography. Grease and water abhor each other; but stone agrees with both. As the scene-painter boasted that, with a lump of whiting, an ounce of red-lead, a pot of glue, and a pennyworth of blue-verditer, he could paint a view of the bay of Naples; so, and with not so much exaggeration, could an artist declare his competence to execute a rude work in lithography on a

paving-stone, with a tallow candle, a pail of water, and a pot of lamp-black.

With astonishing perseverance the stout-hearted Senefelder overcame all difficulties. His failures were innumerable. But he went on trying again, and trying back, until he had successively invented the ink, chalk, etching, transfer, and woodcut processes. He experimented likewise in tinted and coloured lithography,—what is now called the polychromatic manner. He discovered the art of printing in gold and silver, and moreover essayed lithography on "stone paper" in the sprinkled manner, and in imitation of India-ink drawings. All this he called the high art of lithography. Touching the engraved process of the same art, he took off impressions in imitation of line engravings, pen-and-ink drawings, aquatints, mezzotints, soft ground etchings, stipple or chalk engravings, and outline plates.

All this was done before 1819, and, in that year, with characteristic candour and simplicity of heart, he gave to the world a detailed account of every one of his discoveries; divulged every one of his secrets; laid bare with childlike simplicity minute descriptions of all his recipes and prescriptions; took the whole world into his confidence, unreservedly. He had been abused, vilified, misrepresented both at home and abroad; but in the whole of his voluminous work, we find no passage more acrimonious than one in which he asserts that, if "Mr. Rapp, of Stuttgardt, thinks he invented lithography, he is mistaken." He ends his labours with a suggestion for the application of lithography to cotton-printing, and with these simple words: "I now close my instructions, and wish from the bottom of my heart that my work may find many friends, and produce many excellent lithographers. May God grant my wish!"

Peace be with thee, Aloys Senefelder!

The first lithographic prints published were pieces of music, executed in 1796. The art was introduced into England in the year 1800, under the name of polyautography. It was vehemently abused, vilified, and opposed; principally by artists

and engravers, and fell almost immediately into disuse; being patronised only by amateurs. But, in 1819, Mr. Rudolph Ackermann, who had done good service to Art and Science in other ways (his shop formed part of the first *house* in London lighted with gas, and people used to walk on the other side of the street not to be too near the dangerous combustible,) took up lithography, published a translation of Senefelder's work, established printing-presses, purchased a stone quarry in Germany, and devoted himself heart and soul to the encouragement and improvement of the art. Plate engravers, painters, staunch old Tories, and objectors on principle, abused it in a frantic manner. It was heretical, abominable, destructive. The solemn, awful, inexorable, literary Rhadamanthus, the dread *Quarterly Review*, itself, sitting imposingly on its curule chair, in ambrosial big-wig and high-heeled shoes, promulgated edicts against the new-fangled invention; and, in a review of Captain Franklin's Narrative of his Polar Expedition, solemnly warned the public against the "greasy daubs of lithography." "It's all very well in its way; but it must be kept within its proper limits."

Proper limits! Lithography, after all, only shared condemnation with railroads; and both have so far kept within their proper limits as to spread from London to Seringapatam, from Paris to New Zealand, from Dublin to Sydney. As to the British Government, it condescended to notice lithography, and to patronise it, in the second year of its introduction to this country. The condescension and the patronage were, however, confined to the imposition of an *almost prohibitory duty* on the importation of the very material without which there could be no lithography—the stones! To equalise the burden, after a very Hibernian fashion, it immediately took off the protective duty on foreign prints; and thus threw into the hands of foreigners what before had given bread to thousands throughout the British empire. This was, it must be remembered, at the same time that the French, Austrian, and Russian Governments were sending agents to Munich to examine into and report upon the merits of Aloys Senefelder's invention.

XIV.

Waiter!

WHEN did it first occur to him to be a waiter? Was it ambition, accident, an adverse fate that made him one? Was he born a waiter, or did he achieve waiterhood, or was it thrust upon him? "Who first seduced him to the foul revolt?" Did he, straying one day, a child, into the great room of the London Tavern, and seeing the tables laid for a public dinner, fold his little arms and cry: "And I, too, am a waiter!" even as the Italian exclaimed: "Ed anchè io son pittore!" How the deuce did he come to be a waiter?

John never brings me a tooth-pick; Thomas never whispers to me with grave mystery the degree of cut—prime or rather low—which the veal or pork is in; Alphonse never asks me with a suavity—worthy of the *ancien règime*—whether I will take cream to my coffee; William never cries, "Yessr!"—Charles, "Coming;" James never shrieks down the speaking-tube that communicates with the kitchen, without a flood of queries pouring in upon me. I am naturally inquisitive, and the waiter is to me such a mystery that I always feel inclined to ask him to sit down opposite to me when I have paid my reckoning, and talk to me. I should like to draw the waiter out, to learn his past history—to know his secrets, if he has any,—to gather his statistics—to know what he thinks of me, and of the other customers. But how can I do this, and what time has the waiter to converse with me, when the old gentleman in the next box is clamouring for his whisky, and the red-headed man in the Gordon plaid has called for a welsh rarebit in so loud

a tone that his next move seems not unlike to be that of rushing to my table and dragging the waiter away from me by the hair of his head?

A chapter might be written upon the impatient men who are irascible and hard upon waiters. I like to be gentle with them. If they do not bring what I want on the instant, they are at least books to me which I can read and meditate upon; and the only punishment I ever inflict on a neglectful or uncivil waiter is to ask him for a cigar-light, make him a low bow, and showing him twopence, inform him that I intend to present it to the waiter at the Hen and Chickens hotel at Birmingham, whither I am bound by the night mail, instead of to him. He feels this severely. He would, were he malicious, unwait upon me; but he can't; my dinner is gone and past; so all he can do is to overcharge the next customer, which is no business of mine, or to retire to his pantry and repent, which is better.

But I know men,—I am sure they are tyrants at home—bully their servants, pester their wives, and beat their children—who seem to take a delight in harassing, badgering, objurgating the waiter: setting pitfalls in the reckoning that he may stumble, and giving him confused orders that he may trip himself up. These are the men who call in the landlords, and demand the waiter's instant dismissal because their mutton-chop has a curly tail; these are the pleasant fellows who threaten to write to *The Times* because the cayenne pepper won't come out of the castor. These are the jocund companions who quarrel with the cabmen, and menace them with ruin and the treadmill. I never had a fracas with a cabman in my life; and once, when the driver of a dashing hansom told me confidently that the fare from the White Horse Cellar to Kensington turnpike would be four shillings, I poked him in the ribs, telling him he was a droll fellow; whereupon he, seeing the humour of the thing, drove me cheerily to the palace gates for a shilling.

The association of cabmen and waiters suggests to me a question over which I have long pondered. What do they say of their fares and their customers after they are departed? Do

they talk about them at all? I think they do. A philosopher whom I knew, found out, after much research, a cabaret in Paris which was the special resort of the cab-drivers after their hours of labour. He was of the incredulous, and thought the men with the glazed hats and the red waistcoats would confine themselves to discourse upon the hardness of the times, the smallness of the fares, the badness of the roads, the capacity of their horses, or the dearness of oats; or, at most, that over the alcoholic results of their *pourboires* they would discuss literature, the drama, politics, or the share-market.

But he was agreeably disappointed. The conversation ran almost entirely upon the persons they had driven during the day. Chip bonnets and green mantles trimmed with fur, were commented upon; the stout man with the five heavy bundles tied up in silk handkerchiefs, and which jingled as he took them out of the cab, was reckoned up; bets were laid about the sallow man with the blue-black beard, whose left wrist was bound up in linen, whose face was covered with scratches, who hired the cab at the top of the Rue du Temple, and was set down at the Havre Railway station, stopping the vehicle five times during the journey, as if to alight, and changing his mind each time. Heads were shaken gravely when a red-nosed driver told of how, inspecting the interior of his cab after the sallow man's departure, he had found three cigars, of which a finger's-breadth had scarcely been smoked, but which were all pulled and gnawed to pieces; and how on the window-strap he had discovered five deep, dull, brownish-red marks like those of fingers. Histories were woven and strung together from fragments of letters and broken flowers that had been left on the cushions by veiled ladies; from old men with eyes red as with weeping; from boys who had told the cabman to drive anywhere for three hours, and had paid him thrice his fare; from destinations countermanded, and orders to drive slowly, and blinds that had been drawn down, and check-strings broken. What but this: love, crime, sorrow, felicity, were eliminated from the seemingly uninteresting proceedings of persons the driver had scarcely seen, and who had jumped in and out of his carriage, paid their

one franc ten, or one franc seventy-five centimes, and gone on their way, never to be seen again by him in this world.

When the spoons are to be counted, the gratuity-halfpence reckoned, the napkins verified, the check-balance struck at night; when the gas is turned down, and the legs of the mahogany tables turned up, like those of lazy dogs; when the tired cook emerges from the lower regions, and, wiping her hot face, essays to forget that such things as "chop and 'tater" or "steak well done" can be; when the last customer has vanished, and the waiters have their suppers (I would give something to see a waiter sup), then you may be sure the tide of conversation turns on the customers of the past day. Then you and I and all the world of customers are brought before the *vehmgericht* of the Saladin Coffee-house. Then our liberality and our meanness, our habit of choking over our soup, and method of brewing our punch, the handles of our umbrellas, the cut of our paletôts, are all weighed and noted, and commented upon.

Moles, and bats, and deaf adders that we are, we imagine that yonder man in the white neckcloth has neither eyes to see nor ears to hear, and that he is content to bring us our dinners and take our twopences without further question. Why, he knows all about us. We sit in a box and talk as though we were in a padded chamber; but there is an ear of Dionysius by every coffee-room bell. The waiter is aware of us. How we went into the City to-day, and couldn't meet that party who is to cash the little bill; how we don't mind telling Tom, in the strictest confidence, that Jack is an infernal scoundrel; how we are madly in love with Emily; how we like coming to the Saladin Coffee-house, because that ruffianly Mopus never comes there (Mopus dines at the Saladin every day); how the waiter has not the slightest idea whom we are. Moles and bats! the waiter often knows our tailors, our washerwomen, and the exact amount of our incomes. He knows, when a customer tells him that he has left his purse at home, and that he will settle that little matter next time, how far the customer is trustworthy.

Men who pass the major portions of their lives in spying into

other men's affairs, think stupidly that their own actions are quite concealed and secret, and that the rest of the world is indifferent to them. Error! Our most secret doings, nay, what we imagine to be our inmost thoughts, are often the open talk and jeer of hundreds of people with whom we have never interchanged a word. That more people know Tom Fool than Tom Fool knows is, though at once a truism and a vulgarism, a profound and philosophic axiom. Despise not the waiter, for he may know you thoroughly. Be careful what you do or say, for there are hundreds of machicolated crevices in every dead wall, whence spy-glasses are pointed at you; and the sky above is darkened with little birds, eager to carry matters concerning you. "Dio te vede" (God sees thee) they write on the walls in Italy. A man's own heart should tell him this; but his common sense should tell him likewise that men are also always regarding him; that the streets are full of eyes, the walls of ears.

'I should like some self-sufficient cheap dandy to know how contemptible and ridiculous he is to hundreds whom he thinks admire him; how the secret of his jewellery is revealed and scoffed at, and his second-hand clothes are appraised, and his carefully concealed garret is notorious. I should like some self-righteous Pharisee to know how transparent and loathsome his hypocrisy is, how his oleaginous smile deceives no one, how his secret cozenings, his occult vices, are divulged and bruited about, how men shrink from the pressure of his fat clammy hand. Should I like everybody to know how much that is bad and mean, and vile and contemptible, which the rest of the world know about them, how poorly they talk and think of their fellows? No, it would be intolerable. Psha! never mind what people say of you; or rather, take you care that you give them no cause to speak ill of you. Then, if they persist in calumny, laugh, or go bravely out and give them all the lie.

Being myself (or endeavouring, I dare say wrongfully, to persuade myself that I am) of the same way of thinking as that jovial miller who had his residence on the banks of the River Dee —caring not much for anybody, and attributing a similar feeling

towards myself to the majority of my acquaintances—the personal opinion of the waiter does not distress me much; and I am enabled to concentrate all my inquisitive faculties upon him. Yet I am at once at issue with the jolly miller, for I care a great deal for the waiter. I want to know so much about him. Why his name in England is never Christopher, Francis (the last waiter by that name dates from Henry the Fourth's time), Frederick, or Eugene; and why, in France, he should never be John or Thomas, but Alphonse, Antoine, Auguste? An English waiting Anthony or Augustus would be unbearable. How about the waiter's home, too,—how about his wife, his children? Do they wear white neck-cloths, and carry napkins over their arms? Do they ever play at waiters? I know the undertaker's children play at funerals; the entire nation of French children play at soldiers; I have seen children play at ships, at school; I have been told, though I do not credit it, that brokers' children play at distraining for rent; but do the infant Johns and Charleses play at "Yess'r," and "Coming"? Do they imitate in their baby manner the footstep swift but stealthy?—the waiter's wonderful lingering about a table, as if something were wanted when nothing is wanted, and which prompts you at last to order in desperation something you do not want? the whisking away of crumbs, the mystic rubbing of the hands, the sudden appearance, as if from a stage shooting-trap, in unexpected places? the banalities of waitorial conversation about the weather; the long time that has elapsed since he has had the pleasure of seeing you; and the gentleman in the left-hand corner box, who drank three bottles of port every night regular, for thirty years, who always gave the waiter ninepence when he went away, and, dying worth a mint of money, left it to a "horsespittle?"

But a graver question is evoked by this. Is waiting an art and mystery? Have young waiters to serve an apprenticeship to it, as to other crafts, or is it self-taught, spontaneously acquired? I incline to the latter solution. A young waiter—a boy waiter, I mean—is simply a young bear that no amount of licking will bring into shape. I can recall now a horrible eidolon of a young cub

of a boy waiter who officiated in a Westmoreland inn. I shall never forget his atrocious red head, his mottled face (something like the tablets of compressed vegetable soup), his flapping ears, the huge encircling collar that made his head look like an ugly bowpot, the fixed grin, half-idiotic, half-sardonic, that distorted his gashed mouth. He was a very Briareus of left hands; he stamped on your corns in handing you the salt; he spilt gravy over your linen; he never came when he was wanted; he knew nothing, neither the day of the month, nor the name of the next house, nor the time for the train to start. He fought with the boots, and had his ears boxed by the cook, and whenever you entered your bedroom you were sure to find him there, contemplating your portmanteau or your dressing-case with the same horrible grin.

I have met scores of these oaves, miscalled waiters, in my travels. A little girl, now, can wait with exquisite neatness and dexterity. She grows up at last into the neat-handed Phillis, with the smile, the ringlets, and the ribbons, who waits on you in pleasant country-town inns; but of the young waiter my fixed impression is that he grows up a young carter, or a young navigator, or a young hippopotamus—which he is. You can train the boy you have in chambers to wait decently at table, because you can throw books and clothes-brushes at him, and stand over him with a bootjack while he lays the cloth; but what good ever came out of a boy in buttons, a footpage, in the waiting line? He breaks the crockery, he ruins the table-cloth; his fingers are in every made dish, and in every jam-tart; and he very frequently runs off, buttons and all, taking with him the silver spoons and any unconsidered trifles in the way of clothes or loose cash that he can lay his awkward hands upon. Do these hobbledehoys ever become waiters? It cannot be so. Nor do I believe in the existence of any training-school for these servitors. I never heard of such an educational institution, where the tie of the neckcloth and the twist of the side-curl were taught; where lessons were given in the art of plate-carrying, beer out-pouring, or table-laying; or where sucking waiters received instruction in

that mysterious system of arithmetic—not, decidedly, according to Cocker, but pursuant to the directions of some tavern Walkingame, in whose problems fourteen pence become one-and-fourpence, and twenty pence one-and-tenpence.

Whence, then, do waiters come? My theory is, that the grub or chrysalis state of the waiter is that anomalous being known as the "young man." The young man, mostly with long, lank hair, and in desperately threadbare black clothes, who is always in want of employment; who is continually calling on you at breakfast time, to beg you to get him "something to do;" who is willing to do anything, but who, on being put through a *vivâ voce* examination as to his capabilities, is generally found unable to do anything. If you suggest copying, you find that he has not paid much attention to his handwriting; indeed, his caligraphy suggests nothing half so much as the skating of an intoxicated sweep over a sheet of ice. If you recommend emigration, ten to one the "young man" has already made a voyage to Port Phillip or Natal, and found it "didn't suit him." You ask him whether he has been brought up to any trade, and he answers radiantly that he has served part of his time as a music-smith, and is immediately clamorous for employment in that line, looking quite reproachfully upon you if you do not set him at once to work at hammering trombones and forging triangles.

Your friends and relatives in the country are embarrassingly addicted to sending you young men of this description. I remember one who brought me a letter of introduction, in which the writer modestly threw out a hint that I might perhaps find an opening on the press for young Noseworthy—which was the young man's name. I have a panacea for ridding myself of these young men. I give them a letter to the stage-manager of some theatre royal, with a view to obtaining an engagement in the noble corps of supers; and young Noseworthy either subsides into a peaceable crusader, peasant, Italian noble, or halberdier, or else he is so rebuffed and browbeaten, and ordered off, and hustled at stage-doors, and by the janitors thereof, that his nose is quite put out of joint, his spirit broken, and he troubles me no more.

All, however, do not enjoy the possession of such a young man's best safety-valve ; and even I have found the experiment fail in one or two instances.

Wherever and however the waiter picks up his education you find him in the possession of many accomplishments. He can always read and write passably. He knows the railway time-bill by heart ; he has a prodigious memory ; he balances plates and dishes with the agility of a juggler ; and if his rhetoric be not classical, it is at least fluent and sustained. Finally, I may observe that there are three classes of waiter types, each possessing special characteristics—putty-faced waiters, who are servile and fawning ; whiskered waiters, who are tall, solemn, and generally rise into landlords ; baldheaded waiters, who are patronisingly friendly, and excellent judges of wine.

XV.

Unfortunate James Daley.

THROUGH what inadvertent misapprehension relative to the laws of mine and thine the late unfortunate Mr. James Daley came to be exiled from his native country, Ireland, of which he was so bright and conspicuous an ornament, I have had no means of ascertaining. That he was so exiled—that is to say, transported beyond the seas, does not admit of a doubt; for I find him to have been a convict in the penal settlement of Botany Bay, in or about the year seventeen hundred and eighty-eight.

Anno Domini seventeen hundred and eighty-eight was a real *annus mirabilis*. Many millions of persons were born and died in every month, week, day, hour, minute, and second of that year; the sun shone with great brilliancy over an immense space of territory; copious showers of rain fell from the heavens; and it is on indisputable record that, at one period of the winter, snow covered a considerable portion of the earth's surface. In the year 'eighty-eight departed from Rome all that was immortal from that miserably mortal amalgam of the lees of wine, the bitter ashes of Dead Sea apples, the weeds and tares of unchecked passions, the withered flowers of hope, and youth, and honour, that was once Charles Edward Stuart, to the vast majority of his contemporaries the Young Pretender; but on some cherished medals, and on Canova's tombstone, and in some stout Scottish hearts, still Charles the Third, King of Great Britain, France, and Ireland. This same 'eighty-eight, too, flourished in New South Wales, the unfortunate James Daley.

The life and motives of Mr. Daley are enveloped in mystery, which no person has yet thought it worth his while to solve. Mr. Daley was transported, but for what crime even does not, as I have premised, appear. Whether he was a Defender, a Thrasher, a Whiteboy, a Peep-o'-day Boy, or a member of any other occult society of Irish Philadelphi; or whether, with a noble disdain of the factious acrimonies of politics he had, inverting Goldsmith's remark on Burke, given up for mankind what was meant for party, and so confined himself to larceny; whether he was a victim whose expatriation is to be numbered among Ireland's wrongs, or a scoundrel of whom his country was well rid, must remain a doubt, subject to the everlasting—if, the everlasting,—perhaps, and the everlasting—why. Unless, indeed, any body should take the trouble to rout out the Irish sessions papers, or gaol returns (if any existed), for the year seventeen hundred and eighty-eight.

James Daley's misfortunes are over, and the kangaroo hops over his grave; his name would never, probably, have found a place in print, even in the Biographia Flagitiosa, had I not the other day stumbled across a passage in an old book that led me to ask myself the question, whether he may not have been the first discoverer of the gold fields of Australia! In page thirty-six of a quarto volume, published upwards of half a century ago, entitled "An Account of the English Colony of New South Wales," by Lieutenant-Colonel Collins, I find the following passage:—

"The settlement of Sydney Cove was for some time amused with the account of the existence and discovery of a gold mine; and the impostor had ingenuity enough to impose a fabricated tale on several of the people for truth. He pretended to have discovered it at some distance down the harbour, and offering to conduct an officer to the spot, a boat was provided; but immediately on landing, having previously prevailed upon the officer to send away the boat, to prevent his discovery being made public to more than one person, he made a pretence to leave him, and reaching the settlement some hours before the officer, reported that he had been sent up by him for a guard. The fellow knew

too well the consequences that would follow on the officer's arrival, to wait for that, and therefore set off directly into the woods, but being brought back, was punished for his imposition with fifty lashes. Still, however, persisting that he had discovered a metal, a specimen of which he produced, the governor ordered him to be taken again down the harbour, with directions to his adjutant to land the men on the place which he should point out, and keep him in sight; but on being assured by that officer, that if he had attempted to deceive him he would put him to death, the man confessed that his story of having found a gold mine was a falsehood which he had propagated in the hope of imposing upon the people belonging to the Fishbourn and Golden Grove storeships, from which he expected to procure clothing and other articles in return for his promised gold dust; and that he had fabricated the specimens of the metal which he had exhibited, from a guinea and a brass buckle, the remains of which he then produced, and was rewarded for his ingenuity with a hundred lashes. Among the people of his own description there were many who believed, notwithstanding his confession and punishment, that he had actually made the discovery which he pretended, and that he was induced to say it was a fabrication merely to secure it to himself, to make use of it at a future opportunity: so easy is it to impose on the minds of the lower class of the people."

Easy it is, indeed, to impose on the minds of this same lower class: the imposition has been tried on the largest scale and with the most enlivening success during a long series of years; yet the judgment even of the superior orders is occasionally fallible, and the great ones of the earth sometimes make fools of themselves. Years ago unfortunate James Daley was flogged, threatened with death, and sneered at by lieutenant-governors, judge-advocates, soldier-officers, overseers, and free settlers. Only a few convicts, miserable and despised as himself, believed in him and his gold mine; he got not his deserts, yet 'scaped he not the whipping; but in this day and hour how many of the superior classes will be bold enough to aver that the wretched, contaminated, brutalised, crime-stained, flagellated Irish convict may not have discovered

gold—may have been within the arcana of Mammon—may have stood on the shores of that wonderful Pactolus to whose golden sands myriads of men and women are rushing now in frenzied concupiscence of wealth!

I am fond of believing strange things, and I therefore register my opinion that Daley did, if not actually discover gold, know of its existence somewhere in the vicinity of Sydney. I think the guinea and brass-buckle story was a blind; that the lower class of people were right in their estimation of their comrade's character; and that unfortunate James Daley, after his one imprudent avowal that he had a secret, determined to keep it thenceforward unrevealed, because he hated his masters in his heart, and loathed the idea of placing wealth at their command. The monkeys, they say, have the gift of speech, but will not use it lest man should set them to work; unfortunate James Daley, perhaps, kept mute for a parallel reason. "Here I am," he may have said, "lagged—a lifer. I have found gold. What good will it do me to tell the lieutenant-governor and the judge-advocate where to find it too? I shall get a ticket-of-leave, perhaps, and a few guineas; and I shall get drunk, and knife a man, and be lagged again, or scragged; while the lieutenant-governor goes home to be made a lord of, and the judge-advocate is thanked by the parliament-house." So James Daley held his tongue, and was rewarded for his ingenuity with a hundred lashes.

His ultimate reward on earth, and one that fairly earns him the title of unfortunate, was yet to come. He is flogged at page thirty-six of the book I have quoted; at page forty-one he is hanged. In the case of the unfortunate Miss Bailey, the captain who behaved so ill to her was, I believe, an officer in the Marines. In the case of the unfortunate James Daley, the judge who sentenced him to death was also in the Marines—Lieutenant-Colonel Collins, judge-advocate of the colony. Bailey was throttled in her garters; Daley in an orthodox halter. Here is the entry of the discoverer's crowning reward:

"In December, James Daley, the convict, who, in August, pretended to have discovered an inexhaustible source of wealth,

and who had been observed from that time to neglect his labour, and to loiter about from hut to hut, while others were at work, was at last convicted of breaking into a house and plundering it, for which he suffered death. Before he was turned off, he confessed that he had committed several thefts, into which he had been induced by bad connections."

Here is an end of James Daley, his misfortunes, his discoveries, and his crimes. His secret, if he had any, died with him. It is doubtful whether he discovered gold or not. It is certain that he broke into a house, and that he was rewarded for his ingenuity by a hundred and fifty lashes and a gibbet. He was whipped like a dog and hanged like a dog, according to law. The only question is, whether he deserves a niche in the temple of the martyrs of discovery by the side of Christopher Columbus, Solomon de Caux, and Galileo; or whether I myself ought to be put in the pillory (supposing such a machine to exist), for desecrating these respectable pages with the apotheosis of an unmitigated rascal.

Perhaps, after all, it does not matter much whether the Australian gold-fields were in reality first discovered by James Daley. We as seldom see the right amount of praise given to the right man, as the right man in the right place. I dare say Cadmus didn't invent letters himself. I imagine that he bought the patent right for a few drachmas from some poor wretch who lived in an attic and had no soles to his sandals. "That man is not the discoverer of any art," writes Sydney Smith, "who first says the thing; but he who says it so long, and so loud, and so clearly, that he compels mankind to hear him."

XVI.

Madame Busque's.

BELIEVE me, Eusebius (to be classical and genteel), that many more good things exist in this world than are dreamt of in any philosophy—from that of the most rose coloured optimist to that of the sourest cynic. Don't put any faith in yonder ragged, morose, shameful old man, who because he lives in a tub instead of decent lodgings, and neglects, through sulky laziness, to trim his hair and beard and wear clean body-linen, calls himself Diogenes and a philosopher, forsooth. If the old cynic would only take the trouble to clean the horn sides of his lantern, and trim the wick of the candle within it, he would not find it quite so difficult to find an honest man. That all is vanity here below, I am perfectly ready to admit; but have no confidence in the philosophy, which, with its parrot-prate of the Prince of Wisdom's apothegm—vanity—turns up its nose at, or pretends to ignore, the existence of the hidden good. Believe me, good is everywhere.

Poor, naked, hungry, sick, wronged as we may be through long years, snug incomes, well-cut coats, good dinners, sound health, justice and fame will come, must come at last, if we will only wait, and hope, and work. All have not an equal share, and some men, by a continuous infelicity which the most submissive are tempted to regard as an adverse and remorseless fate, fall down weary and die upon the very threshold of mundane reward; but let any average man—the medium between Miserrimus and Felicissimus—look retrospectively into himself, and consider how many good things have happened to him unexpectedly, unasked for, undeserved; how many happinesses of love, friendship, sight,

feeling, have come upon him unawares—have "turned up," so to say familiarly.

A great Italian poet has said, that there is no greater sorrow than the remembrance in misfortune of the happy time. It can be scarcely so. It is balm rather than anguish for a man when fortune has thrown the shadow of a cypress over him, to recall the dear friends, the joyous meetings, the good books, the leafy days of old; for with the remembrance comes hope that these good things (present circumstances looking ever so black) will return again. It is only when we know that we have spurned, misused, wasted the jewelled days in the year's rosary, that remembrance becomes sorrow; for Remembrance then is associated with Monsieur Remorse; and we wish—ah, how vainly! ah, how bitterly!—that those days had never been, or that they might be again, and we use them better.

All things, good or bad, are relative; and though it would not be decent to express as much joy for the discovery of a good dinner as of a good friend, yet, both being relatively good in their way, I may be permitted to rejoice relatively over both in my way. I have not been very successful lately in the friendship line; but in the article of dinners I have made a discovery. A succulent daily banquet has popped upon me suddenly; and I feel bound to record its excellences here, to the glory of the doctrine of fortuitous good in general, and of Madame Busque in particular.

I am resident in Paris, and feel the necessity of dining seven consecutive times a week. Such a necessity is not felt in the same degree in London. A man may take a chop in the City, a snack at lunch time, a steak with his tea, a morsel after the play. None of these are really dinners, but are considered sufficient apologies for them. Moreover, you can call upon a friend, and be asked to take a "bit of dinner" with him. People don't ask you to take a bit of dinner with them in Paris. With the French, dinner is an institution. You are asked to it solemnly. Probably you dine at a restaurant, and know how much the repast costs your friend; for you see him pay the bill. Besides, going out to dinner costs more money in gloves, fine linen, starch, cab-hire, and

losses at cards afterwards, than a first-rate dinner given by yourself to yourself.

So, as I am neither a diplomatist, a subscriber to a table-d'hôte, a marrying man, or a *pique-assiette* (by which I mean an individual who gets invited to grand dinners by asking to be asked), I find that the great majority of my quotidian dinners have to be provided at my own cost and charges. I cannot dine at home; in the first place, because one can do scarcely anything at home in France save sleep; in the second place, because I am alone, and must have company at dinner, be it only a waiter, a chandelier, or that bald-headed old gormandiser with the Legion of Honour, full of gravy and gravity, who sits opposite to me at the Café Corazza, eats seven courses, and has two silver hooks fastened to the lappels of his coat, whereupon to suspend the napkin that shields his greedy old shirtfront from falling sauces.

Now I like dining at the Café Corazza, which was kept, in my time, by Ouix my friend. I knew him when he was about ninety cars old, rouged, had curly hair and moustaches as black as jet, and used to tell stories of the days when he was *maître-d'hotel* to Charles the Tenth, and brought in the first dish, dressed—Ouix, not the dish—in a court suit and a sword by his side. I like all the down-stairs Palais Royal dinners; Verrey's; Vefour's; the Three Provençal Brothers. I like Vachette's on the Boulevard. I like the newly invented "Diners de Paris," where for three francs fifty you may eat like an alderman. I like the Blue Quadrant; the House of Gold; the restaurant of the Magdalen. I like Chevet's lobsters, and delicacies out of season. I like Marengo fowls, eels as female sailors, ortolans, blown omelettes, pies of fat liver, truffled turkeys, and kidneys "jumped" with wine of Champagne. They are good, and I like them; so do wiser and better men. I like a bumper of Burgundy to be filled, filled for me, and to give to those who prefer it Champagne. I like Beaune, Mâcon, Chablis, Sauterne, Lafite, Médoc, Thorins, Chambertin, Pommard, Clos Vougeot, Romanée, Mercury (not blue pill by any means), and all the generous wines of the Golden Slope which are so delicious and are growing so wofully dear. In

a word I like good dinners; but alas! my name is not Rothschild, nor Royalty, nor Matthew Marshall.* I can dine well once in a way, and that is all.

Resident in Paris some time ago, I had dined well—very well, once, perhaps twice in a way: and began to recognise the necessity of mediocrity in dining. No more for me were the golden columniated downstairs saloons of the Palais Royal. Gold and columns and plate glass I could have in the upper apartments of that palace of gastronomy, and at a very moderate price; but the good meats, good sauces, good wines—they remained below. "Prix fixe" stared me in the face. Dinners at a fixed tariff of prices and a fixed tariff of badness. I could have six courses for one and eightpence, but what courses! Gloom began to settle upon me. I saw visions of dirty little restaurants in back streets; of *biftecks* like gutta percha; of wine like pyroligneous acid, with a dash of hemlock in it to give it body; of sour bread in loaves of the length of a beefeater's halberd; of winy stains on the table-cloth; of a greasy waiter; of a pervading odour of stale garlic; of having to ask the deaf man with the asthma and the green shade over his eyes yonder, for the salt.

Better, I said, to buy cold halves of fowls at the roasters' shops, and devour them in the solitude of my fifth floor; better to take to a course of *charcuterie* or cold pork-butchery; Lyons sausages, black puddings, pigs' feet, polonies with garlic, or sparerib with savoury jelly. Better almost to go back to the Arcadian diet of red-shelled eggs, penn'orths of fried potatoes, fromage de Brie, and ha'porths of ready-cooked spinach—of which, *entre nous*, I had had in my time some experience. I was meditating between this and the feasibility of cooking a steak over a French wood fire at home (a feat never yet accomplished, I believe, by mortal Englishman); I had almost determined to subscribe for a month to a boarding-house in the *banlieue*, where the nourishment, as described on the public walls, was "simple but fortifying," when the genius of fortuitous good threw Madame Busque in my way.

* Formerly Bank of England notes recited a promise to pay the particular amounts for which they were issued to Mr. Matthew Marshall.

Through the intermediary of a friend, be it understood. He and I had dined well, the once, twice, or thrice in a way at which I have hinted. He mentioned at the conclusion of our late repast that he must really dine at Madame's to-morrow.

I don't know what time in the afternoon it was, but it was getting very near dinner-time. A certain inward clock of mine that never goes wrong told me so unmistakably. It was very cold, but we were sitting outside a café on the Boulevard; which you can do in Paris till the thermometer is all sorts of degrees below zero. We were sitting there of course merely for the purpose of reading the latest news; but in deference to received café opinion, we were imbibing two *petits verres* of absinthe, which is a delicious cordial of gall, wormwood, and a few essential oils, and which, mixed with a little aniseed and diluted with iced water, will give a man a famous appetite for dinner. And thereanent I ventured to propound the momentous question: "Where shall we dine?"

"Well," said my friend, "I was thinking of—of a crib—a sort of club in fact, where I dine almost daily when I am in Paris."

I suggested that he might have some difficulty in introducing me, a stranger, to the club in question.

"Why, no," he answered; "because you see it isn't exactly a club, because it's a sort of 'creamery;' and, in fact, if you don't mind meeting a few fellows, I think we'd better dine there."

I suggested that we had better go home and dress.

"Oh," exclaimed my friend, "nobody dresses there. To tell the truth, it's only at Madame Busque's; and we'd better be off as fast as we can, for nobody waits for anybody there."

I confided myself blindly to the guidance of my friend, consoling myself with the conviction that whatever the club or "creamery" might be, the dinner could be but a dinner after all, and amount to so many francs on this side a napoleon.

We went up and down a good many streets, whose names I shall not tell you; for unless I know what sort of a man you be, and what are your likings and dislikings, I would not have you go promiscuously to Madame Busque's, and perchance abuse her

cookery afterwards. At length, after pursuing the sinuosities of a very narrow street, one of the old, genuine, badly-paved, worse lighted streets of Paris, we slackened our footsteps before a lordly mansion,—a vast hotel, with a *porte-cochère* and many-barred green shutters. My heart sank within me. This must be some dreadfully aristocratic club, I thought, and still mentally I counted my store of five-franc pieces, and wondered tremblingly whether they played lansquenet after dinner.

"Is it here?" I faltered.

"Not exactly," answered my companion, "but next door,—behold!"

He raised his hand and pointed to a little sign swinging fitfully in the night air and the light of the little lamp; and I read these words:—"*Spécialité de Pumpkin Pie.*"

"Enter," said my friend.

We entered a little, a very little shop, on whose tiny window-panes were emblazoned half-effaced legends in yellow paint, relative to eggs, milk, cream, coffee, and broth at all hours. A solitary candle cast a feeble light upon a little counter, where there was a tea-cup and an account-book of extreme narrowness, but of prodigious length. Behind the counter loomed in the darkness visible some shelves, with many bottles of many sizes. Some tall loaves were leaning up in a corner, as if they were tired of being the staff of life, and wanted to rest themselves. A spectre of a pumpkin, a commentary of the text outside, winked in the crepuscule like a yellow eye. There were no eggs, broth, cream, or coffee to be seen; but there was a pleasant odour of cooking palpable to the olfactory nerves, and this was all.

"Push on," said my friend.

I pushed on towards another little light in the distance, and then I became sensible of a stronger and yet pleasanter odour of cooking; of a cheery voice that welcomed my friend as Monsieur Tompkins (let us say), and of another calmer, softer sweeter voice, that saluted him as her "amiable cabbage,"—both female voices, and good to hear.

Pushing still onwards, I found myself in a very small, many-

sided apartment, which, but for a round table and some chairs, seemed furnished exclusively with bottles. There were bottles here and bottles there, bottles above and bottles below, bottles everywhere, like the water round the ship of the Ancient Mariner; but the similarity stopped there, for there were many drops to drink. At the round table, more than three parts covered with bottles, sat five men with beards. They were all large in stature and in beard, and were eating and drinking vigorously. Pasted on the walls above were several portraits in chalk, among which I immediately recognised those of the five bearded guests. Nobody spoke, but the five beards were bowed in grave courtesy: the clatter of knives and forks relaxed for a moment to recommence with redoubled ardour; and two additional places were found for us at the round table with miraculous silence and promptitude. Then the proprietor of the cheery voice, a rosy-cheeked country girl, with her handkerchief tied under her chin, which at first suggested toothache, but eventually became picturesque, placed before me bread, butter, a snowy napkin, a knife and fork, and a bottle of wine. Then the calm, soft, sweet voice became a presence incarnated in a mild woman with a gray dress and sad eyes, who, addressing me as "dear friend of Monsieur Tompkins," suggested potage,—in which suggestion I acquiesced immediately.

The round table was of simple oak, and there was no table-cloth. The chairs were straw-bottomed and exceedingly comfortable. The floor was tiled and sanded. A solitary but very large wax-candle burnt in an iron candlestick. The salt-cellar (to prevent any one asking or being asked for it) was neatly poised on the top of a decanter, and was visible to all. Pepper was a superfluity, so excellently seasoned were the dishes. At intervals hands appeared, very much in the White Cat fashion, and tendered sardines, olives, the mild cheese of Brie, the pungent Roquefort, and the porous Gruyère.

I don't mean to say that I had any ortolans, quails, forced asparagus, or hot-house grapes, at Madame Busque's (though I might have had them too, by ordering them), but I do mean to

declare, that I had as good, plentiful, clean, well-dressed a dinner as ever Brillat-Savarin or Dr. Kitchener would have desired to sit down to. Wines of the best, liqueurs of the best, coffee of the best, cigars of the best (these last at the exorbitant rate of a penny a piece), and, above all, conversation of the very best.

For you are not to suppose that the five bearded men were silent during the entire evening. Dinner once discussed, and cigars once lighted, it turned out that the proprietor of one beard was a natural philosopher; another an Oriental linguist; a third a newspaper correspondent; a fourth a physician; a fifth a vice-consul:—that all had travelled very nearly over Europe, had ascended Vesuvius, had smoked cigars in the Coliseum, had taken long walks in the Black Forest. Travel, anecdote, science, literature, art, political discussion, utterly free from personality or prejudice —all these, with a good and cheap dinner, did I find haphazard at Madame Busque's.

Nor perhaps was this the only good thing connected with the "creamery." I have since found myself the only Englishman among sometimes not five, but fifteen subjects of a Great Republic, three thousand miles away; and up to this time I have never heard the slightest allusion to guessing, calculation, gouging, bowie-knifeing, repudiation, lynching, locofocos, know-nothings, hard-shells, alligators, or snags, or any of the topics on which our Republican cousins are supposed almost exclusively to converse. More than this, the much-to-be-abhorred questions of dollars or cents are never broached by any chance.

I need not say that I dine very frequently at Madame Busque's. I like her; her cookery; her guests; her good-humoured servant Florence, and her Pumpkin Pie, for which she has a speciality and the confection of which was taught her by the vice-consul. I am not going to tell you how cheap her dinners are, or where they are to be had, till I know more of you; but if you will send to me certificates of your good temper and citizenship of the world, I don't mind communicating Madame Busque's address to you, in strict confidence.

XVII.

Sir John Barleycorn at Home.

IT is my present purpose to relate to you the particulars of a visit which I once paid to a very worthy knight, a friend of mine, whose family has enjoyed great fame and consideration in the English country for upwards of five hundred years—Sir John Barleycorn.

This knight, though he has never aspired to any grade superior to that which his equestrian spurs confer on him, has been time out of mind the boon companion of emperors and monarchs; yet, with a wise magnanimity, he hath not, at the same time, disdained to enliven the leisure moments of clowns and churls—yea, down even unto vagrants and Abraham-men. One of Sir John's panegyrists sings—

"The beggar who begges
Without any legges,
And scarcely a rag on his bodye to veile,
Talks of princes and kynges
And all these fine thynges,
When once he has hold of a tankard of ale."

Ale being, indeed, the article for the confection of which, and his many convivial qualities, Sir John Barleycorn hath, in times both ancient and modern, been principally celebrated. So highly esteemed was his ale of old that another poetic eulogiser of our knight, in reverent station no less than a bishop, hath declared his willingness that both his outward back and side should "go bare, go bare," provided that his inner man were irrigated with a sufficiency of "jolly good ale and old." And in our own days there have not been wanting bards enthusiastic in sounding

the praises of Sir John Barleycorn and his ale, from him that writ the affectionate strophe commencing with "Oh, brown beer, thou art my darling," to that other lapwing of Parnassus, the democratic admirer of Sir John, who, in his lay, calls down fierce maledictions on those who would "rob a poor man of his beer."

It was with an honest pride that Sir John (a burly, red-faced, honest-looking country gentleman, in a full suit of brown and silver, with a wig of delightful whiteness) discoursed to me of these matters, when last stopping in town, at the coffee-house where he entertained me. "Yes," he said, "I and my ancestors have seen fine days, I can tell you. We have entertained more kings, crowned and discrowned, than Monsieur Voltaire's Candide ever saw supping together at the Carnival of Venice. My father was a favourite (and rivalled it sharply with Prince Potemkin too) with Catherine of Russia. The Polish nobles delighted in him, and the Muscovite Boyards literally drank up his words. Nor was he less considered here in England. Queen Bess honoured my great-grandfather; and it was with a foaming tankard of my great-uncle's October brew that the serving-man soused Sir Walter Raleigh when, surprising him smoking a pipe of tobacco, he, the servitor, thought his master to be a-fire. Down where I dwell the monks of the old abbey frequently chose their cellarer for abbot, so high a respect had they for even those remotely connected with the Barleycorns.

"But we have seen in our time evil days. We have been vilified, scandalised, made responsible for all the evils which an indiscriminate and immoderate use of our good gifts may bring upon intemperate persons. The last Sir John was indicted and tried for his life at Glasgow by a temperance poet; and had he not put himself upon his country and proved beyond a doubt that none of the genuine Barleycorns ever meant harm to the people of Scotland, but that it was an idle, intemperate, deboshed fellow, smelling terribly of peat smoke—one Usquebagh, who had formed an illicit alliance with a cast-off hussey of the Malt family—that had through them endeavoured to bring the Barleycorns to shame; had he not done this it would have gone hard

with him. You may see the report of the case now in a Scotch poem, called 'The Trial of Sir John Barleycorn.' I myself, as harmless a man (though I say it) as ever broke bread, have been treated in these latter days as something very little better than a murderer, a male Brinvilliers, and my ale as a sort of *aqua tofana*. 'Twas a French chemist did me this turn, thinking to annihilate me. You shall take coach with me to-morrow, and we will go to my ancestral seat, where the principal branch of our family hath had their habitat since Harry the Eighth's time. Sir, you shall do John Barleycorn the honour of a visit at his poor house at Burton-on-Trent."

Whereupon this jovial knight (he should be a baronet, for his title is hereditary, but he stoutly disclaims the bloody hand, and writes himself simple *eques*) called for t'other flaggon; which being discussed, he paid the reckoning, and appointing a rendezvous for the morrow, swaggered off to bed humming Bishop Still's old air. 'Tis said he sleeps in a beer-barrel, and washes himself in the morning by turning the tap of a cask of Burton ale over his face and hands; but that is no business of mine.

"Burton-on-Trent," Sir John vouchsafed to tell me, whiling away the time as we rolled along the London and North-Western Railway, Birmingham-ward, "has been celebrated for beer and breweries for many hundred years. Old Doctor Plot, in his Staffordshire 'Natural History,' mentions the celebrity of Burton-on-Trent for malting. The great Parliamentary general, my Lord Essex (a worthy nobleman, but on the wrong side), writing in sixteen hundred and forty-four on the subject of a garrison to be placed in Burton, says that the inhabitants were 'chiefly clothiers and maltsters.' Sir Walter Scott alludes to Burton and its brewers in 'Ivanhoe.' Sir Oswald Mosely, in his 'History of Tutbury Castle,' tells us that the intelligence of the Babington conspiracy was conveyed to Queen Mary Stuart, while a prisoner in Tutbury Castle, by a brewer at Burton. Who knows but that the Scots queen may have been kept in knowledge of the progress of the plot for her deliverance by treasonable documents wrapped round the bungs of the ale-casks? Doctor Shaw adverts

to the Burton breweries as famous and flourishing in seventeen hundred and twenty; and the records of our house show that the founder of that branch thereof, now managed by two well-known firms, was in extensive commercial communication with Russia, Poland, and the Danubian provinces—all great consumers of the sweet strong ale of Burton—early in the reign of George the Second. Yet, in England," resumed Sir John, taking breath, and murmuring something against confounded railways and in favour of a cool tankard, "the celebrity of the Burton beers was almost purely local till within late years. The Burton Barleycorns sent but little of their wares to London. The Peacock in Gray's Inn Lane is mentioned by Doctor Shaw (seventeen hundred and thirty-eight) as the first Burton-ale house. To be sure, there were in those days only packhorse roads to London. There are people alive now in Burton who can remember to have heard their mothers tell of the first construction of the roads to the neighbouring towns."

Swiftly the rapid steam-serpent bore us towards the home of beer; and my travelling companion told me long stories of the herculean labours of the brewers, whom he liked to consider as the Barleycorn intendants or stewards; how one of them and the Russian ministry fell in and fell out; and how he put his trust in princes and was deceived accordingly.

"But respecting pale ale," I asked, "pale ale—bitter ale—the delight and solace of the Indian subaltern in his fuming bungalow; the worthy rival of brandy pawnee; the drink without which no tiffin can be complete, no journey by dawk possible: the favourite drink here in England of lord and bagman, duchess and nurse; the much admired tonic for invalids and persons of weak interiors?"

"I'll tell you. While in London in eighteen hundred and twenty-two, one of my brewers was dining with an East Indian director and was talking with some despondency of his trade anxieties.

"'Why don't you try the India trade?' asked the director.

"'Don't know of it.'

"'Leave the cold countries: try the hot. Why not brew India beer?' The director rang the bell, and ordered his butler to bring a bottle of India ale which had been to India and back. Sir John Barleycorn's representative tasted it. Went home. The director sent him a dozen of the beer by coach. The brewer took counsel with *his* head brewer, a practical, hard-headed man, the hereditary maltster of the firm. They held a solemn council with locked doors, and the result was that the first mash of the East India pale ale, of which more than ten thousand hogsheads are now shipped off annually to the three presidencies, was brewed in a tea-pot.

"There, sir," concluded Sir John; "that's the true legend of pale ale. Not so interesting, perchance, as the tradition concerning the discovery of roast pig in China, the invention of grog, or the first preparation of pickled herrings by the Dutch. There is nothing new under the sun, and there can be no doubt that bitter ale was well known to the ancient Hebrews, as the editor of *Notes and Queries* will tell you. But here's Tamworth."

At Burton-on-Trent we traversed a yard as thickly strewed with empty barrels as Woolwich Dockyard is with empty cannon; but a peaceful arsenal—a field of drink and not of death. Working or lounging about were sundry big draymen, selected, as draymen should be, for their size and strength; all possessing a curious family resemblance to their cousins-german the Barclay and Perkins and Truman and Hanbury men in London. They were backing horses and performing curious feats with drays, and toppling full casks about like gigantic ninepins, with such ease and such grave and immovable countenances that I could not help thinking of the goblin players for whom Rip Van Winkle set up the pins that very long night on the Catskill Mountains; or of those other players whose skittle-ground was on the Hartz in Germany, and who had Frederic Barbarossa for their president. We mounted a steep flight of stairs into a large apartment and watched the sacks of malt being slowly hoisted up by a crane through the window.

The malt is first weighed, then sifted in a hopper with a double screen; then, being precipitated up a curious contrivance called a "Jacob's Ladder," is crushed between a series of rollers like a dredging machine. And by "crushing," Sir John took particular care to inform me, he did not mean "smashing." The corporeal integrity of the barleycorn is preserved, not intact, but by being with its germinatory offshoots "starred," turned inside out, as it were, but still collapsible to its original dimensions. Crushed, this malt passes into a long trough, and is pushed by an Archimedean screw from hopper to hopper (each lined with zinc, and looking like a floury Erebus), amidst clouds of minute farinaceous particles which got down my throat and into my eyes, and set me sneezing and coughing uproariously. These different hoppers come down into, and are all feeders of the great mash-tub in the room below. I descended a staircase into this mashing-hall, and as soon as my eyes (scarcely quit yet from the floury simoom) had recovered from the blinding and scalding effects of the clouds of steam, I gazed around. Vessels resembling washing-tubs on a Megatherian scale met my eyes on all sides. These tubs are mash-tubs, each of which will hold one hundred quarters of malt; each large copper has a capacity for three hundred and seventy barrels; and in them the malt (supplied from the hoppers above) is mashed into a gruel thick and slab—the hot water being first let in—mashed by huge sails or paddles working with a circular motion, with huge velocity, yet capable of being stopped in a moment—until the starchy matter in the malt is, by heat and moisture and motion, converted into wort—the wort we have been all so familiar with in our young days when home-brewing took place; and for furtively consuming which (hot, sweet, and weak) from half-pint mugs, our youthful ears have been frequently boxed.

There is one monster tub here, Sir John told me, whose feeder will be put in requisition to supply three thousand barrels, or ninety-six thousand gallons of ale, the amount of one single order. I may remark, on the authority of the Barleycorn knight, that "light beers" do not require a "stiff mash;" that every hundred

quarters of malt take upon an average seven hours-and-a-half mashing; and that in the brewery we are now surveying there can be mashed in the Barleycorn interest as much as fifteen hundred quarters a week.* The several minor details, relative to the exact proportions of water, temperature, and other niceties would not, I opine, be in any way interesting to the general reader; there are besides slight points of trade skill and trade experience which are closely-kept Burton secrets.

After a passing glance at a giant coal-scuttle in the mash-room, we went into the chamber of the hop coppers, where, in huge vessels of that rubicund metal, the hops are busily boiling with the wort. These boil together for a stated time, and then the boiling liquor comes down into a gigantic strainer. The hops left at top are pressed and sold for manure, the Excise interfering and prying and thwarting the brewers through the whole process. From this strainer the liquor (now become a sort of inert beer, possessing flavour and bitterness without pungency), is drawn by a prodigious arterial process of pipes into the next important stage in its career, the cooling-room. And I may mention that while bending over the hop coppers, and watching the bare-armed perspiring men stirring them with great flat spoons or ladles, or gauging them with the mash rule, Sir John Barleycorn requested me to taste the hops, which I did, and found them to be very bitter indeed; upon which Sir John chuckled, and asked if I thought it worth while to employ strychnine, as had been grievously libelled by a certain French ignoramus.

I may compare the cooling-room to Behring's Straits turned brown—a sea of pale beer. On all sides—as far as the eye could reach, at least—lay this waveless, tideless sea of pale ale, traversed by an endless wooden bridge. Leaning over the balustrade of this bridge, gazing at the monstrous superficies of ale lying here

* The brewery here referred to is that of Messrs. Allsopp and Sons. Of late years their establishment at Burton-on-Trent has undergone vast extension, an entirely new brewery, much larger than the original one, with cooperages and other works, having been added since this article was first published. The firm can now mash no less than six thousand quarters a week, or quadruple the quantity mentioned above.

a-cooling in a liquid valley, I saw myself in liquor. A good brewer, Sir John was kind enough to inform me, likes also to see himself in liquor; if his person be well-reflected in the cooling ale it is a sign that the mash has been successful. So I gazed on the ocean, and at the arterial process of pipes, at the pillars supporting the low roof, and at the flood-gates of beer far away, until, to tell the truth, the odour of the liquor made me somewhat muddy and confused, and I was not sorry when my host and guide moved forward to another department.

The wort, come to the complexion I have described, is now removed into the fermenting squares, loose boxes of beer, of plain white deal, numbered and in tiers. Here yeast is mixed with it, and the process of fermentation goes on—to what exact extent must depend, of course, on the judgment, ability, and experience of the brewer. Upon the surface of the lighter fermenting rises a thick froth, so pregnant with carbonic acid gas that it will put a candle out, and nearly knock you down in a fainting fit if you put your nose close to it; but, being heavier than the atmospheric air, soon sinks to the bottom.

From the fermenting squares the liquor, now really pale ale, is conveyed by an intricate machinery of pipes into the cleansing or turning room. Here the casks, by hundreds and thousands, after being whirled and churned round, in order thoroughly to clean them, receive the beer, and are finally bunged and branded. They are almost immediately carted away to the railway and to London. The bottled pale ale, albeit brewed by the same process as the draught, is bottled from the wood in London, without any connexion with or reference to Burton. The bottles have nothing to do with the brewers.

Thus ends my experience of how beer in general, and pale ale in particular, is brewed for Sir John Barleycorn at Burton-on-Trent.

THE END.

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